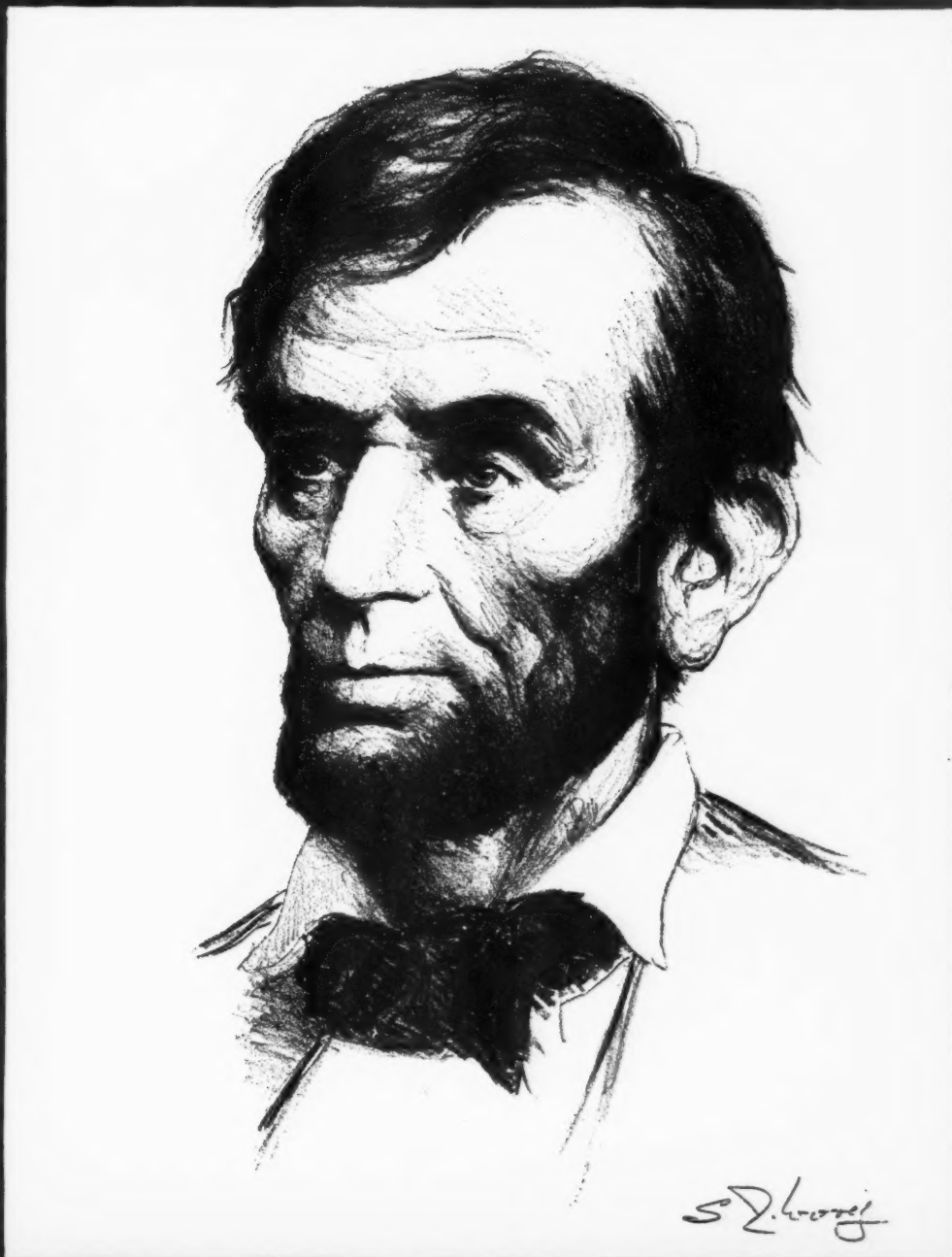




L I T E R A R Y

Cavalcade

A MONTHLY FOR ENGLISH CLASSES PUBLISHED BY SCHOLASTIC MAGAZINES



LITERARY CAVALCADE, a Magazine for High School English Classes Published Monthly During the School Year. One of the SCHOLASTIC MAGAZINES.

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OUR FRONT COVER



S. J. Woolf, the artist who drew our front cover, was both an artist and a writer. As an artist he was famous for his portraits, of which the drawing of Abraham Lincoln is an excellent example. As an artist-writer, he traveled all over the world portraying and interview-

ing celebrities. Probably no other artist of our time knew and portrayed as many notables as did S. J. (the initials stand for Samuel Johnson) Woolf. While he made his drawings, he and his subject talked. Woolf would make an occasional note on his sketch paper. Out of these dozen words he would reconstruct an hour's interview. Woolf was born in 1880 and until his death a few months ago was a member of the staff of the *New York Times Magazine*. The portrait of Lincoln on our front cover is reproduced through the courtesy of Associated American Artists. The drawing above is a self-portrait.



LITERARY Cavalcade

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Make Something Happen

You couldn't paint without love,

he had said . . .

and plain Harriet Keller felt dead inside

By Eve Merriam

THE springy footsteps of our teacher, Lamar, bounded beside me. "Aha! And now let us see what kind of picture we have here, Miss—ah—"

"Keller. Harriet Keller." I sighed. Five months in his class, and he still didn't know my name.

"Of course! Miss Haller." His head bobbed large as a balloon above the matchstick body, his shiny mustache quivered as he bent closer to my canvas. "M'm." He shrugged. "You should try to make something happen." He rapped his knuckles on the easel. "Still life—you feel like still life inside and so it comes out dead fish. Fall in love!" he commanded. "You must fall in love to learn to paint!"

The class giggled in embarrassment. Lamar turned away from me, his words flung out to everybody now. "Take my advice. Do not sit in a dark brown room with blank canvas. Introduce



yourself to life, to love. Then it will be time to create! Love first, paint second!" He wheeled abruptly out of the room.

My head ached. These city art classes three evenings a week were to mean so much to me. They were to offer holiday glamor in my workaday, stenographic world, they were to become a substitute for the love and beauty I lacked. But Lamar was right: You couldn't paint without love. I felt dead inside. Plain Harriet Keller whom no Prince Charming would ever bring to life. I turned my unfinished canvas to the wall and walked down to the basement locker room. The gloomy subterranean passage suited my mood.

Arthur Liss was already there, putting away his belongings in a battered green metal box. Pale and melancholy as an unemployed clown, he could be depended upon not to break my depression.

We left the darkened building together and at a cafeteria on the corner stood silently in line for coffee and doughnuts. When eating could no longer occupy our attention, we were forced to talk.

I filled in the slow dots after his remarks. His job as a shipping clerk. The frame house where his parents rented rooms. His younger sister Maud who had scarlet fever when she was ten and never grew any taller. I pictured Maud's doll-like stature and easily imagined the stunting fever spreading to the neighborhood—all of it dwarfed, denied, and I no stranger to that atmosphere.

Make something happen, Lamar had said. Yet here I passively was, with Arthur Liss whose existence was as dull as my own, whose pale eyes blinked no invitation to the golden trombones and scarlet roses of love.

I stayed home from the class for several nights and then returned, not with any flare of inspiration, but merely a plodding determination to see the term out. Arthur and I fell into having coffee together at the cafeteria. I wanted terribly for him to be handsome or clever, but then of course I realized he must be wanting the same things from me, so I quickly gave up those notions.

During the final two weeks of the term, I tried in class to think of interesting things to talk about with Arthur in the cafeteria afterward. With his poor dwarfed sister, and the rented rooms for home, his life must be even more shut-in than my own. I would invent some stimulating person I had met, or lie to him about some extraordinary place I had visited.

Better than that, I decided, I would give him tangible evidence. I had seen posters advertising luxurious cruises to

About the author . . .

● In addition to her short stories, Eve Merriam has written publicity, fashion copy and radio scripts. But she is primarily a poet and in 1946 won the Yale Younger Poets Prize. Now at work on a novel, she hopes to have it finished this spring. She won't discuss work in progress. "But it is not going to be depressing," she says. "I'm so tired of depressing things and heroines who belong in asylums."



Bermuda—the sand there was pink, and there were large fuchsia flowers cascading down to turquoise waters. Such a scene I would paint for Arthur. He could hang it in his narrow room off the kitchen; when he looked at it, he could forget the cooking smells, the whine and dirt of the streets, the nagging of his boss.

I blocked in the lines, then covered my easel with a cloth to keep the surprise and hurried down to the locker room. Arthur wasn't there. Then surely he would be waiting for me on the front steps.

After half an hour, I walked over to the cafeteria. There were many stooped shoulders inside, many faces pale from working under electricity all day, but none was Arthur's.

The coffee tasted weak as tap water.

Three nights more followed the same pattern, except that I walked slowly past the cafeteria instead of going inside. Arthur came to class; he smiled at me. But he seemed to disappear at the end of each session as if by a trap door. The colors of my painting paled; the purple flowers looked like sick, contagious patches to me, and I blotted them out. The turquoise water muddied to gray. I left it that way.

And then it was the final session. Half a dozen students, Arthur among them, kept on painting until the moment Lamar arrived. Lamar was to decide tonight which, if any, of the student paintings would be chosen for the



annual exhibit. I wanted the agony to be short, please.

Lamar came in, followed by a stout, red-faced man with a beard: Walter Willard, head of the Arts Project.

They examined a few canvases, hemmed and hawed, and then it was Arthur's turn. Instinctively, I flinched for him.

Neither Lamar nor Willard said a word; they held their heads so and so, their hands flashed rapid messages.

Finally Arthur broke into their secret pool. "It's a portrait," he explained, "of Miss Keller."

I couldn't believe it. He wouldn't do such a thing to me. What right had he to mock me, to expose my pitiable dullness? The class swung around to stare at me. There was no place I could run for cover.

"So? Let's have a look at the original," Willard commanded me with a forward jut of his beard.

I itemized every crack in the flooring as I walked up to the front of the room. There was a rusty nail in the center that had been splattered with yellow and blue. . . .

"Of course! Miss—ah, Haller." Lamar bobbed up and down. "A remarkable likeness."

I hated him almost as much as I hated Arthur.

"How do *you* like it?" Arthur's voice slid like the Eden snake into my consciousness. I looked at the canvas. No matter what, I won't cry, I won't give them the satisfaction. Not tears that any of them will be able to see.

"It's marvelous. Marvelous." Willard repeated the word. "He's really made it happen all right."

The painting was beautiful. A soft flowering landscape, and you could almost hear the music singing somewhere in the distance. And in the foreground—a woman so lovely and sweet, like a fire in winter, like a cool drink on the hottest August day.

I wanted to strike Arthur for having mocked me so.

"Keep looking," he whispered, his hand forcing me back to it. The hair was worn like mine. The eyes were clear and large, but shaped as mine when they stared at me from the mirror. And so with it all: nose, mouth, chin. I stood straighter, then cringed again as I looked about the class, expecting some sign. None of them smiled; no one was laughing at me.

I looked at Arthur; past the wrinkles, past his pale, work-worn features, past the crooked front teeth that never could afford braces: I looked at Arthur.

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By Bennett Cerf

Wild Editors I Have Known

HAVE you ever entertained the notion that editing a magazine would be just your dish? If so, this little piece is intended to give you pause. No job in the world offers a surer and quicker promise of a first-class case of stomach ulcers, and if you don't believe me, you have only to take a canvass of all the dyspeptic specimens now extant.

Finding new writers and artists, and then holding on to them, avoiding libel and plagiarism suits, fighting the inroads of eager beavers in the advertising department, and getting copy to the printer on time for every issue are only part of their problem. They must also live under the perpetual fear that something is going to happen while a number is on press or about to hit the stands that will make one of their leading articles—perhaps the one featured on the cover—look ridiculous.

Especially vulnerable, of course, are the news magazines—not to mention the motion-picture "fan" periodicals, which often come out with rapturous descriptions of the idyllic home life of two famous Hollywood love-birds a day or



so after said love-birds have hit the front page with a super-colossal free-for-all in a night club, and marched off to the divorce courts.

The day after the Jap raid on Pearl Harbor, one of our best-known magazines appeared with a lead article designed to prove that Hawaii never could be attacked successfully. And just when our unprepared and pitifully inadequate forces were being knocked silly by Japanese aviators, another periodical was featuring a piece by an "expert" who proved conclusively that the Japs were worthless as air fighters because their planes were antiquated puddle-jumpers, their pilots were cockeyed, and their bombs were duds.

Some years ago, an enterprising editor bagged a piece by a noted octogenarian which gave in detail his secrets of longevity. Unfortunately, the day before the article appeared, the octogenarian dropped dead. Another editor lined up eight pages of colored photographs of the accession to the throne of King Edward VIII, and a description of same by the highest-paid journalist in Britain. The editor was correcting proofs when his wife called out, "Hurry up if you want to hear Edward abdicating over the radio."

In August, 1914, a magazine featured an article about the Kaiser, calling him "The World's Greatest Peace Advocate." When it appeared, German soldiers were already tramping through the towns of Belgium. In October, 1929, a big financial digest devoted most of an issue to a wildly bullish interpretation of the market. It reached the stands during the greatest Wall Street crash in history. In April, 1947, another periodical printed Leo Durocher's picture on its cover, and hailed him as one of baseball's indispensables. Manager Durocher, unfortunately, had just been suspended from his job as manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers for the entire season. These were in no sense "boners" on the part of the editors involved; they simply were tough breaks, and there are dozens more like them on the records.

The great newspaper cartoonist, Jay Darling ("Ding"), had a comparable experience in 1935. He made a drawing labeled "The Fates Are Funny That Way," depicting a whole series of national calamities: earthquakes, floods, and train wrecks—but in the concluding panel he showed Mr. Public complaining to his wife, "Yet nothing ever seems to happen to Huey Long!" Three days later, Long was assassinated. One Western paper, in fact, received Ding's cartoon a bit late, and ran it and the story of Long's death in adjoining columns.

During the war, edition after edition of the big news weeklies had to be ripped apart at the last moment because of some sudden and spectacular happening. Even now, the editors of these weeklies spend the twenty-four hours before press time praying that nothing will occur to necessitate a complete reshuffling of an issue's contents. Their wives see them, if at all, by television. One of them hasn't spent a week-end away from his office since he came down with pneumonia trying to catch pictures of a fight between a flounder and a soft-shell crab.

Do you still yearn to be a magazine editor? Or maybe you'd like to try your hand as a circulation manager! Listen to the sad tale of one of the best of them.

About the author . . .

● Bennett Cerf has enough energy to follow three careers at once—and does it. As a publisher he is the president of Random House, Inc. As a columnist he conducts the weekly column called "Trade Winds" for the *Saturday Review of Literature*. As a lecturer he has stimulated audiences from coast to coast. And in his odd (?) moments he writes humorous books like *Shake Well Before Using* and *Try and Stop Me*. But covering three bases at once doesn't interfere with activities at the home plate. Cerf guests are well entertained, and their best stories carefully noted for future reference.

At enormous expense, he installed a complicated machine that isolated all the index plates of patrons whose subscriptions were going to run out in five or six weeks. It automatically printed their names and addresses at the top of one of those irresistible form letters that begin, "Surely you are not going to allow yourself to miss a single issue," etc., etc., sealed and stamped the envelopes, and dropped them in a chute without human hands even so much as touching them. The circulation manager was so proud of this machine that he wrote a long article extolling its virtue, and hailing the company that built it as a benefactor of humanity.

Unfortunately, the machine went out of kilter one sticky summer day, and before the slip-up was discovered, a baffled rancher in Montana received 11,834 letters telling him his subscription was about to expire. The local postmaster had to hire a special truck to deliver them all. After the rancher had read about two hundred of the letters, he got the idea, and mailed the

magazine a check for six dollars, with a note saying, "I give up."

With or without their editors, the magazines march on!

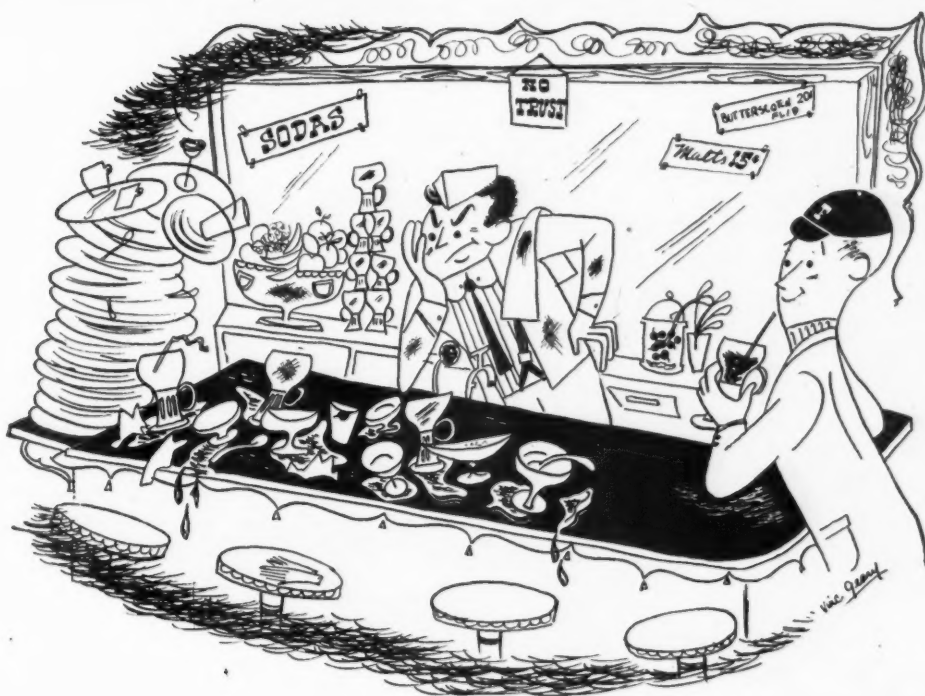
In the late Russell Maloney's delectable pot-pourri, *It's Still Maloney*, he analyzed the quirk that permits laymen who would never dream of showing vulgar curiosity over the earnings of a banker or butcher to ask a writer blandly, "How much did you get for that last piece in the *New Yorker*?" or "How much will you make out of your new book?" Maloney said that Alva Johnston worked out an answer that for some reason is an infallible stopper: "I get twenty-six dollars a column, but I have to pay my own expenses."

One of the best of Maloney's backstage reminiscences of *New Yorker* days concerns the time a regular poetry contributor won the Pulitzer Prize. An editor wrote him a warm letter of congratulation, and tacked on a P.S. that read, "We are returning herewith your last batch of poems, because none seems quite right for our present needs."

Editor Harold ("Sunshine") Ross admits that life at the *New Yorker* is not the same since the redoubtable Alexander Woollcott vanished from the scene. Ross used to goad Woollcott deliberately into writing him insulting letters. Woollcott mailed them in a fine white heat of anger, exulting, "When Ross reads what I called him, he won't dare show his face in public for a week." Ross, however, happily had the letters mimeographed, and dispatched copies to all their mutual friends.

Woollcott once completed some intricate transaction whereby he came into possession of two hundred brand-new Sulka neckties, and, in a moment of unaccountable graciousness, told Ross, "Pick one out for yourself." Ross not only picked one for himself, but pilfered forty extra in the process. The next time Mr. W. paid a scheduled visit to the *New Yorker* offices, everybody in the place, including the elevator man and the young lady at the switchboard, was draped in a Sulka cravat. "Ross," snarled Woollcott, "you are the kind of poltroon I find it hard to deal with," and flounced off to air his grievance to Lynn Fontanne and Alfred Lunt. He even persuaded them to cancel their subscription to the *New Yorker*. The following summer, they discovered the latest issue on Woollcott's own table at Beomoseen, his summer home. "I've forgiven Ross," he explained airily. "I'm writing a piece for him now."

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*The very fact of a man like MacNab brightened the world
and made things easier for the Freshman*

A MacNab Special

By Richard L. Tobin

THERE was just barely enough money to get through the first semester, if every conceivable way and means were employed, from the tried and certain methods of frugality accumulated by a young lifetime of practice. That much was eminently clear to the young man as he added up "estimated expenses of the college year" which the University of Michigan catalogue furnished on page twelve. Naturally, these were minimum expenses—the maximum expense estimate ran to the ridiculously high total of \$1,250 for a full year, not counting incidentals. The staggering sum of \$1,250 was as much as there might be for four full years; divided by eight it meant \$150, more or less for each semester. Eighteen weeks into \$150—a few dollars a week to be earned, and then the last three free for exams and study and time to recuperate. All this lay there on the dining-room table in the figures that had emerged. All this and Heaven too.

But the budget took its first defeat in Ann Arbor the first day of matriculation. The scene was outside Waterman

Gymnasium, and the opponent was a smooth-talking sophomore salesman.

"Got your pot, Frosh?" said the small but persistent fellow as they walked side by side down the Diagonal. "Everybody's got to have a freshman pot. Got yours, Frosh?"

Frosh didn't have one, in fact had never heard of one.

"Only a buck and a half, Frosh. Half a dollar less than the stores on State Street."

This last fact was the clincher, and soon Frosh had parted with a buck fifty and had donned the little gray cap with the short visor that identified Frosh as of the newest and greenest class, the Class of '32.

Five steps in the new cap and another persistent salesman approached.

"Got your *Daily* subscription, Freshman? Can't get very far at Michigan without a copy of the *Daily*. Only four bucks."

If a single item *had* to be got it was *The Michigan Daily*, for there were great hopes in that direction. The pocketbook opened and closed slimmer than before. The transaction was no sooner completed than two more upperclass-

men arrived. A very tall one, with a loud jacket and gray flannels over his brown saddle shoes, opened the barrage: "The *Michiganensian*, Freshman—a complete record of your first year at Michigan. Five dollars, a week from today. Only three seventy-five today! Think of it! You save a dollar and a quarter!"

The pocket-book, which had not been put back, was opened anew.

"Thanks, Frosh," said the tall man genially. "I hope you won't mind if I come calling on you during rushing week. I'm a Delta Rho."

"Can't tell the players without the *Gargoyle*," said the other and smaller upperclassman. "Funny magazine. Best buy at Michigan Ten issues for only a dollar and a quarter."

"Shall I give him the dollar and a quarter, Freshman? That's just exactly the change you have coming," the tall salesman said quickly.

What could he say? In thirty seconds the newcomer was also the proud owner of a year's subscription to the *Gargoyle*. Three other people came up. The Freshman looked desperately about him.

"I've got him. Now you go away," said an upperclassman with chestnut hair and a tan sweater and pearls. She grasped the arm of the prospect gently but surely. The closer she got, the less sales resistance was left in a body that seemed to respond especially to the exotic scent that wafted from her hair and throat.

"How about it, Mr. Freshman?"

"How about what?" said the Freshman naively.

"You know, you're not a bad-looking boy. I wish I were in the Class of '32."

"So do I."

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"Well, thank you! You *are* a nice person. But, then, I can always tell. Now, about this series—"

The sales talk might as well have been a reading of the annual report of Kemsley, Ltd. All the Freshman could do was look at the red lips. The perfume was absolutely devastating.

"Now, do you think you'd like one?" said the saleslady at length.

"One what?"

"A series ticket, silly."

"How much are they?"

"That depends on what you want," said the girl in the sweater. "Do you want a balcony ticket or do you want a seat in the orchestra?"

"What's the difference?"

"You never went to a concert, Frosh?" said another upperclassman who had lined up with wares, flanking.

The newcomer looked in his thinning wallet, and was shocked by what he saw.

"I'd better sit in the balcony," he said.

In the quiet of the room, where familiar things shocked back the departed reflexes, the receipts were put in one pile and the small remaining cash money in another. The familiar budget figures reappeared on the wrinkled slip of paper. A sickening feeling gripped the mid-section and dried the mouth. There was no joy in that Ann Arbor room.

The second day following was the first class day. Three of the four courses assembled with instructions for books to be purchased and assignments made for the week ahead. The assignments were formidable. The University, being state endowed, was obligated to admit thousands of freshmen from Michigan high schools, and could reduce the new class to working proportions only by a brutal, cold-blooded plan of survival of the fittest. One third to one half would

be flunked out by February. From then on, so the word went, things would level off. Therefore the books and paraphernalia had to be bought at once. One could not wait until extra money had been earned. Almost \$25 were spent on books alone.

Then there was the matter of food. The dollar a day listed for the budget was certainly minimum, to a boy from farm country. In fact it was impossible. Inside a week and a half, twenty dollars had gone for food alone, and this had been without a decent breakfast.

By the mid-term exams, therefore, a council of one had to be held to decide major issues. The council wrote of it in a letter home:

"Dear Mama and Pop—

"I'm doing pretty well in school, that is I'm flunking only science. I'd be on probation if it weren't for English, where I got an A. But I'll pull the science up by the end of the year. French is harder than science. Actually, there are people in my French class who can speak it right along, and I can't even remember the cases sometimes. Professor Cabouchon says that half our class will flunk. It had better not be my half or I'll be out of school, what with science. I'm not trying to scare you, just telling you why I feel depressed today. Naturally that isn't all.

"The worst part of it here is money. I never saw so many people asking for money. As you know I started with \$300 for the whole year, planning to use \$150 each semester, and earn an equal amount. Well, the 'Free Press' has been wonderful, and has bought almost everything I've written for them, but they only pay \$5 a column. You'd think a big paper like that would be able to pay more. I can't argue, of course. It's easier than waiting on table or working nights the way a few of the boys do.

"Well, the 'Free Press' has paid me \$40 so far, and I have a Sunday article in there now that would mean fifteen more. But what I was going to tell you was that the \$300 is almost spent, already. Don't ask me how or where. I couldn't tell you if you asked me, and I've tried to save every cent. Actually, I have only \$46 left out of the \$300 plus \$20 from the 'Free Press' due at the end of this month. So, you can see why I'm doubly depressed.

I love you."

There was a P.S. on the envelope's back side:

"Michigan 7, Minnesota 6!!!"

The letter was posted in the corner mailbox, already overflowing with homesick mail; mid-term was a time for it. A small jingle in the pocket of the newly revived winter coat developed into fifteen cents left over from some wild spending spree of the winter before. The prior circumstances were now beclouded, but the fact of the money was genuinely thrilling. A midnight milk shake would be just the thing. The drugstore might still be open. It had been good luck to write the truth in a letter home.

"Chocolate milk shake," said the last customer of the night. The weary clerk gave the customer a nasty look, and surveyed the deluge of unwashed dishes. A large sorority next door had just been in, pajamas under fur coats, and all ordering sticky things like marshmallow or butterscotch. The debris piled so high that it fell over, a nauseating, gummy mess.

"Chocolate milk shake," repeated the clerk bitterly. The clerk was a very young student with sandy hair and an upturned nose. "Don't pay any attention to me. I'm pooped. And look at those dishes. Just look at them!"

The sight certainly was not conducive to nine rahs. One didn't want to



touch the top dish, much less wash them all.

"I don't envy you," said the last customer weakly.

"I was all cleaned up at eleven thirty. Then *they* came in. Sorority dolls with fur coats and big appetites."

"You wouldn't have a job if they didn't come here."

"Maybe I could stand it."

"Do you have to work?"

"I wouldn't do this for fun."

The chocolate milk shake arrived, with an extra scoop of vanilla in it. Nothing at Ann Arbor had tasted as fine. He drank hungrily and deeply.

"What year are you in school?"

"I'm a freshman—second half you might say," said the soda man digging into the butterscotch edges. "I couldn't go to school full time last spring—I had to make some money."

"Sounds familiar," said the customer making straw noises in the bottom of his glass, already emptied.

"I got so far behind I had to do one thing or the other. So I spent the spring and summer at Ford."

"Ford's? Doing what?"

"You'd never guess. I washed out and scrubbed up after the big day shift. It was a job nobody else wanted."

"Good practice for tonight."

"I worked nights at Ford, and afternoons I worked in Walgreen's in Detroit. You eat well in a drugstore. That's why I'm here now."

"Isn't it going to take an eternally long time to get through school?"

The sandy-haired clerk straightened and wiped his red, wet hands on his wet apron.

"I stopped thinking about that a long time ago."

The sandy-haired one glared at the bittersweet. One of the girls had left a penny tip in the syrup.

"— The length of the curse was

so monumental that the customer laughed.

"Learned it out in Montana. I come from Billings. My name's MacNab."

The identities were solidified by a handshake.

"Here," said the last customer. "Let's *both* do that."

The clerk was too weary to protest; the dishes flew and the pile soon melted. By the last sticky spoon the two were great friends and knew a great deal about each other. Something in the young Scotsman struck a responsive chord, and was reflected. The boy from Montana had no father, had had indeed almost nothing at all of the world's gifts. As the story unfolded, the first-year Freshman began to be ashamed of his own troubles. The time went by quickly and the chores were finally at an end.

"Now, my fine fellow," said MacNab earnestly, "I am going to make you a MacNab Special, a real treat if there ever was one. And one for MacNab, too."

Two large banana split dishes were produced and filled with three colors of ice cream, the remainder of the hot fudge sauce, and over the hot fudge all that remained of the marshmallow.

The fact of the prior milk shake meant nothing in view of such munificence. Both banana split dishes were quickly cleaned, as though by a cat.

"Say, I've got to be home," said the guest. "I've got an eight o'clock."

"Run along. And thanks for the help."

"Thanks for the MacNab Special!"

At the door the last customer turned:

"Don't you ever sleep?"

"I don't have eight o'clocks," said MacNab. "I go to school in the afternoon."

"When do you study?"

"Now," said MacNab.

As the days went by, the very fact

of a man like MacNab brightened the world, and made things easier. The *Free Press* not only bought the Sunday piece, but wanted more; and the *Chicago Tribune* also took a special on Big Ten football compared to the rest of the country—favorably of course. The *Tribune* paid \$10, so that with one thing and another the Thanksgiving week end arrived at the same time as the first balanced budget in months.

Rushing began soon after the Thanksgiving holiday and several houses were well along by that date. The fraternity of the tall salesman in the Diagonal was not one to waste a chance. A Thanksgiving dinner invitation was accepted with great pride, and anticipation, since it meant a saving of at least a dollar, the regular eating hall being closed for the day and no rebate.

Thanksgiving was a golden, cool day as the Freshman walked up the long walk at the enormous old house that could scarcely be seen for ivy. There was a group on the front porch in informal poses, but the informality disappeared with the approach of the two tall figures. The taller figure undertook the introductions all around.

"I'm dying of hunger," said a large hirsute gentleman.

"He's always hungry," said the host man.

"Who isn't?" said the Freshman honestly.

"I thought you'd never eat again," said a voice. And the voice belonged to a sandy-haired gentleman in the dressiest sports coat of them all.

"Mac!" said the Freshman. "How in the world . . . ?"

"Don't be surprised, Laddy. This is my house."

It developed that there was no magic except the magic all Scotsmen possess when it comes to stretching a piece of money. MacNab was a personable boy,

and a second-half Freshman already. It had been a whirlwind courtship between the house and Mac, and things had now been worked out so that Mac was Assistant Steward, for which he got his board and room.

"What does it cost to live here?" the Freshman asked, trying to imagine the incredible fortune of joining a fraternity too, and a genuine house like this one.

"About the same as outside, if that's all the money you have."

"But initiation fees and dues—how do you swing it?"

"They come high. But you pay for them when you can. I pay my initiation fee ten bucks at a time. I'm almost even again. May be back in school full time after Christmas."

"I still don't see how I could swing it, Mac. I just don't see."

"When the time comes you'll see. If they like you, and if you like the house well enough."

The Thanksgiving dinner was all the more remarkable for the proximity of the possibility of permanent liaison. Everything that Thanksgiving dinners should be this was. After dinner there was a general collapse and record playing. By 4:30 the guest thought he ought to go, and Mac walked out with him.

"Nothing's impossible in this place," said Mac. "Don't give up, no matter how tough things get; they can always be tougher. I *know*. But I'm all set. I've got it all laid out. Planned and paid for."

THANKSGIVING was, however, the peak of the semester, the peak of optimism, the best that came along. Circumstances began to catch the Freshman by the seat of the pants in early December as professors turned the screw, and there was little time for outside work. The big out-of-town papers began rejecting stories when the football season ended, and the first of the depression was around the corner. After the Christmas visit home, the Freshman had to get out the budget to figure some way of meeting the end of the year. The \$300 designed to stretch into June would not reach February.

It came down to the last week in January, the race between the last few dollars and the blue books of exams. Peanuts, Mac had said, helped stretch meals. This proved to be true, if eaten with a Hershey bar and a glass of milk. But the night before the first exam there was exactly \$10 left in the wallet that lay flat beneath the pillow. Ten dollars to last the eleven days.

The anguish of final examinations which really counted was a new experience to many freshmen. In the state

high schools almost no one was failed, in spite of the big talk. Here, the exams were anonymous—by number in some courses. The general idea was to weed out, not speed along. The science questions made this fact eminently plain. Never had three hours seemed so long, or so short. History came next morning, and was equally difficult.

The letdown was so exhilarating that the two remaining exams were forgotten for a day and one of the precious dollars went to the ticket seller in the movie house on two consecutive nights. The third exam—French—was easier than had been feared, or else the relaxation had sharpened the memory. And now there was almost a week to wait for English.

Two days before the English final the last dollar was stuffed into the pocket and, amid mixed feelings of relief and anxiety, the Freshman answered an invitation to the fraternity house for dinner, presumably from MacNab. This at the worst would put up the steam gauge for the final yardage, and the invitation was eagerly accepted. It was almost providential that the invitation had come—almost as though MacNab had suspected a lowering of funds.

But it had not been MacNab who had sent it. Indeed, on inquiry, MacNab wasn't around; in fact he was almost mysteriously absent. Every question about MacNab was passed over quickly and almost disregarded, or the subject changed by expert subject-changers. MacNab's fate sat like a leaden weight on the Freshman's heart, good as the dinner and songs could be. MacNab had stolen money. MacNab had quit school, overwhelmed by circumstances. MacNab was not going to be back the next term, perhaps not for another year. MacNab had gone to another school closer to Montana. All manner of possibilities ran through the mind, all manner of them, except the real and terrible fact. At length one of the older men drew the Freshman aside, after dinner, and they began talking about the early years in college. MacNab's name came into the conversation almost as though the older boy had put it there.

"I guess you haven't heard, have you?" said the upperclassman, looking at the flame of the match that lit his pipe in periodic flares.

"No. I was wondering where Mac was."

The pipe was puffed and covered with the fingers to get a better draft. The words were hard to say, from young to younger.

"Mac's a very sick boy."

The Freshman could not answer. There was nothing that could be said.

"Mac's been sent home to his family. His mother's alive, I believe."

Still no word, no word that could be said.

"I wouldn't tell you this except you seemed to like each other." The pipe was drawn slowly and more slowly still, for courage. "They think it's cancer. . . ."

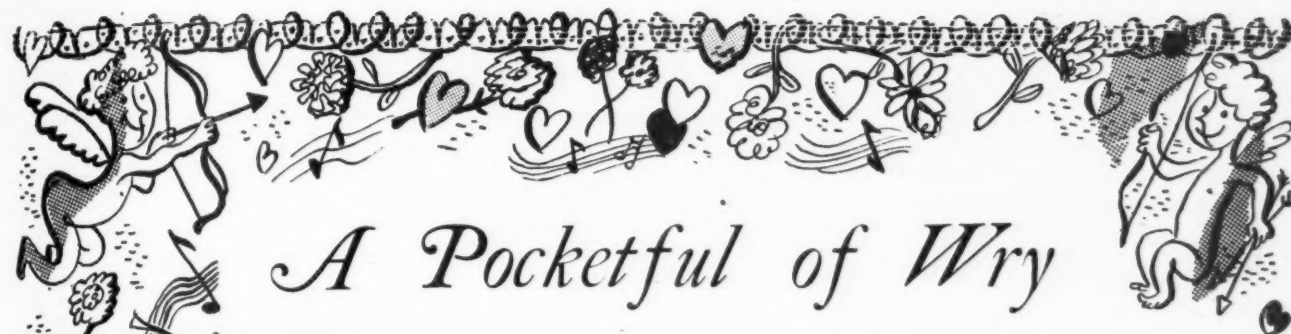
How long had he had it? What could you do about it? Nothing. Nothing at all. Nothingness and nothing at all anywhere.

"I'm sorry. I didn't know," said the Freshman. They sat and smoked their pipes, and they did not speak, and finally it was time to go home. Everyone at the house seemed to know that the terrible thoughts had been handed along, and there appeared to be a warmth that had not even been approached before. First names were used, pats on the back, extra grips of handshake, and genuine feeling that quickened the tear ducts.

THE walk home was slow and hard and the room more lackluster than before. Even the presence of a letter from the *Free Press* with a \$25 check for a Sunday piece failed to brighten the darkness. The mood kept on for days, and nothing could change it. An inserted post card in the science blue-book came back with a "C" on it, better than the best hope. French also was a "C," and English History a "C" plus—so there was surety of a next semester scholastically.

The night before the English exam a telephone call from the *Free Press* offered a regular correspondence for the new semester, at a flat fee of \$15 a week plus overages, which guaranteed the semester financially, and more. And the English exam was a masterpiece of foreknowledge, and a certain "A." Yet these things were somehow empty and they hurt in an indescribable way.

Not until the fraternity pledging, the coming of the first truly hopeful college spring, the first days on the *Michigan Daily*, and the security that came with this and much more, was the Freshman able to forget at any time the awful luck of the Montanan. Yet as time went on it seemed as though what MacNab had said was fulfilled by another, and when the house received the last letter from Billings in May there was preparation for it. No one could go to the funeral, not all the way to Montana. But letters were written and flowers sent on the most beautiful June day that anyone in Ann Arbor could remember, though that was what people said of Michigan every year about that time.



Poems by Phyllis
McGinley

Poor Timing

I sing Saint Valentine, his day,
I spread abroad his rumor—
A gentleman, it's safe to say,
Who owned a sense of humor.
Most practical of jokers, he
Who bade sweethearts make merry
With flowers and birds and amorous
words,

In the month of February.
The antic, frantic,
Unromantic
Middle of February

Now, April weather's fine and fair
For love to get a start in.
And May abets a willing pair,
And June you lose your heart in.
There's many a month when wooing
seems
Both suitable and proper.
But the mating call unseasonal
Is bound to come a cropper.

When blizzards rage with might and
main
And a man's best friend's his muffler,
Pity the February swain.
That sentimental snuffler,
Whose soul must surge whose pulse
must throb
With passionate cadenza,
When he yearns instead for a cozy bed
Alone with influenza.

When winds blow up and snow comes
down
And the whole gray world seems
horrid,
And every lass that sulks in town
Thinks wistfully of Florider,

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Pity the chapped and wintry maid
Who'd trade the arms that clasp her
in,
For Vitamin A and a nasal spray
And maybe a bottle of aspirin.

Who wants to bill, who cares to coo,
Who longs for cherry-chopping,
When noses are red and fingers blue
And the hemoglobin's dropping?
Let summer lovers droop and pine,
Let springtime hearts be airy.
I wouldn't be anyone's Valentine
In the month of February.
The spare-able, terrible,
Quite unbearable
Middle of February.

Humblesse Oblige

A thousand songs have toasted
The joys of high cuisine;
Full many a bard has boasted
Of salads, spiced and green.
They've praised the winking tumbler,
The vine, the corn, the oil,
But I would hymn a humbler
Devising of the soil.
While gourmets raise an eyebrow
And quote a line from Plato,
I sing for those less highbrow
Who love the dear Potato.

Oh, succulent, luscious, caloric and hot,
I give you Potato, the Queen of the Pot.
Though apples may comfort and flagons
can stay me.
To stalwart Potato I sing my do-re-mi.

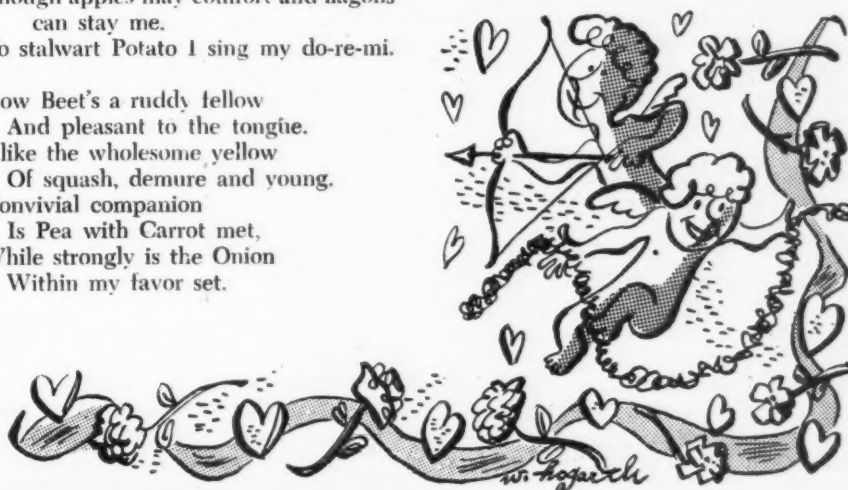
Now Beet's a ruddy fellow
And pleasant to the tongue.
I like the wholesome yellow
Of squash, demure and young.
Convivial companion
Is Pea with Carrot met,
While strongly is the Onion
Within my favor set.

And Broccoli's the winner
Of many a toothsome race,
But ah, I rue that dinner
Potato does not grace.

Cry shame on the lout with digestion
unplacid
Who damns it for starch and dissects it
for acid,
Who nibbles a Lettuce or chews on his
roughage,
Complaining Potato adds poundage and
puffage.

His Spinach let him munch on
In penance for his sins,
Or make a meager lunch on
Exclusive vitamins;
But brave and bold and fearless,
My appetite at edge,
I'll dine upon this peerless,
Inimitable veg
With predatory mutter,
I'll try the Frys of Home,
Or garnish them with butter
And beat them light as foam.

I'll bake them in their jackets,
I'll boil them in the nude,
I'll watch them toss in creamy sauce
With parsleyed attitude;
I loudly shall acclaim them
More dear than beer and skittles,
And let who will go take his fill
Of dietary vittles.



AS ALVIN swung down the beaten grass path to the trailer, the phonograph music behind the crisp plaid curtains seemed to be laughing at him, reminding him of something that had happened a long time ago, but did not matter now. He tugged irritably at the brim of his straw hat, fretting it still further down over his eyes. Time for Mama's eleven o'clock medicine, and Laird's wife just sat in there playing dance music.

"Laird."

He rapped on the back door, calling his brother instead of that flibbertigibbet. He noticed she had strung her clothesline in front of the trailer again, in plain view of the road, although she knew Maud didn't like it. Maud just didn't think it was decent.

"It's 'leven o'clock," Alvin said, when Laird came to the door. Eleven o'clock and Laird still hadn't put his shirt on.

"Lolly's already gone up to the house," Laird said.

"Oh," Alvin stepped back. He could see inside the trailer now, and he was surprised to find the bed made, the breakfast dishes put away. Laird was working over a strip of broken film coiled like a king snake in a flat silver can.

"She took a book," Laird said. "She's gonna read to Mama."

Alvin stiffened. He was sensitive about Maud's not being able to read.

"I gotta go up to the store," Alvin said, turning away.

"I'll drive you up," Laird said.

"I'd just as lief walk it."

Laird grabbed up the jacket of an army fatigue uniform, slipped it on and trotted down the portable back steps of the trailer. Alvin shrugged. He climbed into the car beside Laird, staring straight ahead.

Alvin had been eighteen and Laird ten the summer their father died. That fall Alvin would have started his last year of high school, and he had wanted to finish, he had wanted that graduation paper more than he had ever wanted anything before or since. He had walked twelve miles a day to get his schooling, six miles into town and six miles back, in rain and snow and a northern Virginia cold so sharp-toothed it chewed through his clothes. And even worse than the walking had been the town kids who used to sneak up to him at recess and pull imaginary straw out of his hair, ask him if he'd sold his eggs yet, make fun of his made-over clothes and the way Mama cut his hair. One more year and he would have got

that paper, but Papa had died, and Alvin had stayed home to run the farm.

Everything had been different for Laird. By the time he got to high school the county had a big yellow bus that came right to the door, took him to town and brought him home. And nobody picked, on him, because there were plenty of hill boys to stand up against the town kids and keep them in their place. Laird, without having to walk or fight, could have got the graduation paper Alvin had wanted, but Laird would skip school to go fishing, sell his books to buy cigarettes, and one day, when he was just over fifteen, he had run off with a circus.

"I ain't surprised," Mama had said when Alvin brought her the news, and she had looked up at Alvin and Maud, as though seeing them for the first time after a long separation. Alvin had just

"Hmpf," Alvin had snorted. "A show girl." Maud, hearing his pronouncement had glanced up from her ironing, her cow eyes infinitely patient and resigned. She had nodded, then wet the tip of her finger, touched it gingerly to the iron, and gone back to her work.

"Laird," Mama had said, watching Maud, "would pick a girl with spirit."

Mama must have been sick even then, but she never let on. She managed to hold out until the summer the war ended, and then she couldn't hide it any longer. The doctor used a word Alvin had never heard before, malignancy, but Alvin knew what he meant. And morphine, Alvin learned what that meant too. Mama kept asking for Laird, and Alvin told her he was in the Army, and Mama would say, "But the war's over now. Why can't he come home?" "He'll have to wait his turn," Alvin



**Everything Alvin had wanted had been handed
to Laird . . . and Laird had turned his back on it**

begun to take on weight, his face rounding out, and Maud was six months along with her second child. Then Mama had said something that Alvin and Maud had never spoken of to each other, but that neither of them had ever forgotten, although it was not a thing they tried especially to remember.

"All my life," Mama had said, "I've been tied down here in this valley, them hills risin' up all around me like a high fence, and I've never stopped wonderin' what's on the other side of 'em. I was a growed woman with a lap baby before I ever seen a movin' picture show, and to this day I ain't been on a railroad train. I'm glad Laird's gone. I'm glad he got free."

They hadn't heard from Laird for nearly four years then, might never have heard, except the war happened, and when the Army yanked Laird out of the circus, he wrote home from a camp in Missouri and told them about Lolly.

would say, "like anybody else." But Alvin should have known that Laird would never have to wait like other people. Laird went to the Red Cross, they sent a woman out to see Mama, and two weeks later Laird and Lolly came sailing home, a green trailer bouncing along behind their 1939 coupe.

"Alvin, Mama had said one day after Laird and Lolly had been home about a month, "Laird's army money is running out. It's time you got 'im a job."

Alvin hadn't said anything, but he had thought how like Mama it was to tell him to get Laird a job instead of telling Laird to go out and get it himself. Alvin had gone to see Senator Crouch, and the Senator had spoken to the manager of the new rayon plant, because Alvin was on the county school board and had always supported the Organization. The manager had offered Laird a job at twice the highest wages

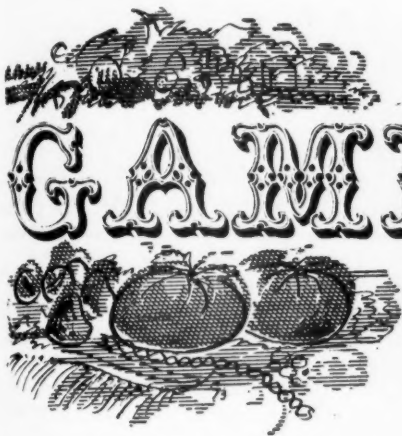
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anybody had ever paid Alvin. But Laird couldn't work in a factory. He was a show man.

"Somepun'll turn up," Laird had said, and two days later he had got a letter from a man in New York who had been in the circus with him and was in the motion picture business now. He had made Laird a proposition, and Laird had driven to town and talked to the man long distance.

"Folks," Laird had announced when he came home that night, "we're in business."

Every night Laird and Lolly would drive to a hill town which had no movie house, and put on an outdoor show. The man in New York furnished the film and projector in exchange for a percentage of the profits. They charged fifteen cents admission, and before each show, while Lolly sold candy



By John D. Weaver

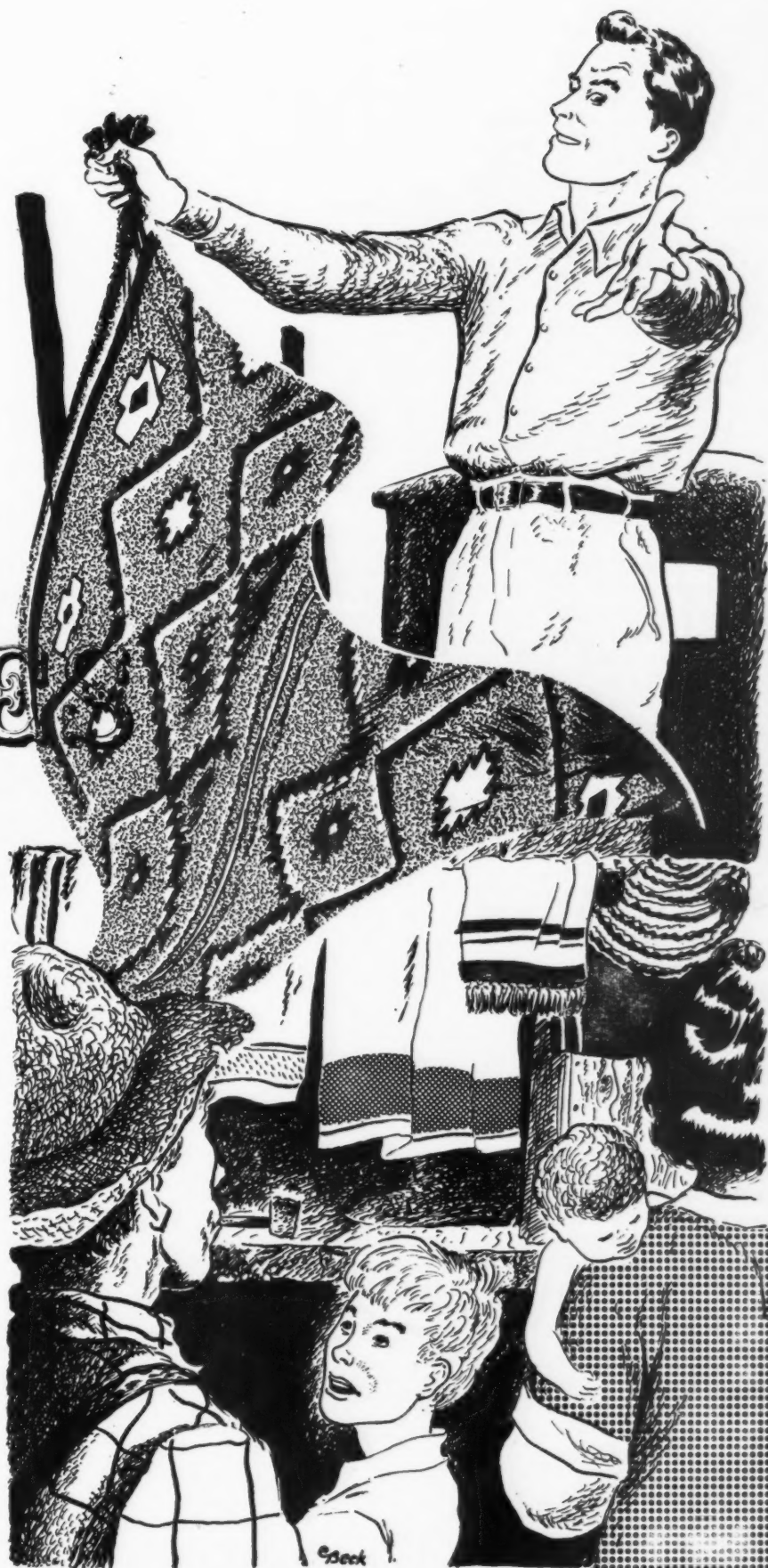
Laird did a few tricks and told a few jokes, then handed out prizes which he bought at wholesale from a place in Chicago. They charged fifteen cents for the candy, which cost them three cents a box. In Laurelton, though, they never charged for the Wednesday night shows. That, Laird insisted, was home, and he couldn't charge home folks. Of course he would always sell the candy to pay expenses.

Alvin spat against the dry wind whirling past the open window of the car, as Laird rolled across the new Laurelton bridge and parked in front of Lovell Jenkins' store. Some children, mostly girls, were playing in the dusty driveway between the store and the Jenkins' big yellow frame house. The minute they spotted Laird, they stopped playing and ran over to him.

"The show man!"

"Trick! Do us a trick!"

Alvin shuffled into the store, the children clearing an aisle for him, then



"This is where she gits the surprise of her life, 'cause the grand prize tonight . . ."

closing ranks again, swarming around Laird. He pulled two red bandanas out of his pocket, and did his disappearing knot trick. The children, who had seen him do it every show night for six weeks, pressed against him begging him to do some more tricks, but he told them to wait till tonight. He had some special new tricks for the show tonight.

"Lov," Laird said, shaking off the children like burrs and striding into the store, "you're a sportin' man. Now I tell you what I'm gonna do. I'm gonna drink a cold bottle of lemon sour, and I'm gonna smoke the best cigar you got in the house, and then I'm gonna flip a coin. If you call it right, I'm gonna pay you double, and if you don't call it, I'm gonna shake you by the hand and walk on outta here with my money in my pocket."

Alvin was reading from a list, Mrs. Jenkins hobbling about the store, getting the things down from the shelves and putting them together on the counter. "Salt. Sugar. Coffee . . ."

"Tails," Lov said.

"Lovell, my friend," Laird said, bowing, "I thank you."

"Just a minute," Lov said. "I didn't get to see that coin."

"It come up heads," Laird said.

"But I didn't see it."

"That's all right, Lov, I seen it."

Lov slapped the side of his leg, chuckling. That Laird, he could joke his way to hell'n back.

Alvin, bent forward under the weight of his box of groceries, started toward the car. Out of the corner of his eye he had seen Lovell slip a stick of chocolate ice cream into a sack and give it to Laird. Alvin had spent four dollars and thirty-six cents, and Mrs. Jenkins hadn't given him so much as a piece of penny candy for the kids, but Laird not only got his pop and his cigar for nothing, Lovell even threw in a little treat for Lolly.

"It'd make your stomach turn," Alvin told Maud when he got home with the groceries, "the way the kids all follow him around and everybody falls all over themselves givin' him treats and . . ."

He stopped abruptly, his glance lighting on four huge red tomatoes, freshly washed and laid aside. Maud followed the line of his look, her face coloring, her eyes dropping.

"Laird's so fond of 'em," Maud said.

"If Laird's so fond of 'em, why can't Lolly help you tend 'em?"

"She's got 'er own work to do."

Alvin picked up the four tomatoes, which were so big his hands could hardly hold them. "I'll take 'em down for you," he said.

As he came near the trailer, he could hear Lolly, and then Laird, followed by

a childish chorus of amazement and delight. It sounded like the trailer was filled with kids. He could make out little Alvie's voice, and he guessed that Maudie and Mattie May were there, too. Alvie hadn't swept the porch yet or brought in the wood chips, and the two girls should be helping their mother wash the tomatoes and put them away. Alvin lengthened his stride. One thing he wouldn't stand for, Laird and Lolly weren't going to spoil his children.

Lolly was standing in the trailer door, her back to him. She turned when she heard him, her yellow hair whipping lightly around her throat. He handed her the tomatoes, mumbling, "Maud sent 'em down." Then he called

About the Author . . .

● John D. Weaver knows well the northern Virginia about which he writes. Most of his family lives there and he spent his summers there as a boy. He was born in 1912 in Washington, D. C. After college came newspaper work in Kansas City. In 1940 he moved to Los Angeles to write a novel, *Wind Before Rain*, published in 1942. With his wife, also a writer, he wrote the play *Virginia Reel*, produced last year in New York City.

to Alvie and the two girls. "You all git on up to the house. You got your work to do."

"Uncle Laird's gonna do his snake trick," Alvie said.

"You finish your work," Alvin said. "Then we'll see about tricks."

The trailer swarmed with children, five on the day bed, at least half a dozen scattered over the floor. Alvie started to whine, and Laird, stepping over the heads of the others, soothed him. "Tonight," Laird said, easing Alvie toward the door, "you'll get to see all the tricks and a nice show besides. A Mickey Mouse."

Lolly held up the tomatoes for Laird to see. "Aren't they terrific?" she said, and she told Alvin again to thank Maud for them. "Laird loves fried tomatoes for his breakfast."

A little girl in a striped blue dress got up from the floor. Alvin wasn't sure, but when he got to thinking about it afterwards he figured she was one of the Claggett girls. She had the Claggett mouth.

"Our'n was bigger," the little girl said.

Lolly flushed. "Yours were nice, too."

"Bigger," the little girl insisted. "Twicet as big."

As Lolly moved to shush the child, Alvin could see the small white sink at the other end of the trailer. It was piled with tomatoes, and there were fresh peas, beets, roasting ears, even a quart pail of blackberries.

"Well," Alvin said, "I didn't know you were already supplied. Another time Maud'n me won't bother."

"Laird never gets enough fresh tomatoes," Lolly said.

"And ain't it nice," Alvin said, "he don't have to work for 'em."

He grabbed Alvie by the arm and yanked him toward the house, the two girls cowering behind him. "No show for you all tonight," Alvin said, and the children set up such a howl that Maud came bobbing out of the house, breathless. She held court on the steps, and the children got to go to the show, but they had to promise not to go down to Uncle Laird's trailer any more.

"I catch you all down there again," Alvin said, "you don't ever git to go to the show again. You hear me?"

"But . . ."

"Now, Alvie, you heard your father," Maud said, and that ended the argument because they had long ago learned that Daddy was always right, and even when he wasn't, they must never let on to Mama they knew he wasn't.

After supper Lolly came up to the house with an armful of magazines. She told Maud to hurry and get dressed for the show, she was going to stay with Mama tonight. Maud protested, but Lolly just smiled and shut her out of Mama's room. Maud, curious to see what kind of a show Laird put on, slipped into her next-to-best dress, a holly print, and rode up to Laurelton in Laird's car, sitting between Laird and Alvin, the children in the rumble seat. She was surprised to find how excited she was, like the children.

"If it was prayer meetin'," Alvin said after Laird had parked the car and taken the projector into Lov Jenkins' store, "I wonder how many of 'em would be hurryin' so fast to git here?"

Maud shook her head. She could see the cars, packed with children, tumbling down the hill roads, bouncing over ruts hidden by the thickening dusk. Parking in the schoolyard or along the blacktop road, wherever there was room, the families filed across the new cement bridge and down the narrow dirt driveway to the sprawling, unkempt yard behind the Jenkins' store. The children ran ahead, eager to get close to the open truck where the show man did his tricks. The older people kept to the back of the yard, talking primaries and hay-making, poking envious fun at the men who had thought to bring pillows or camp stools.

Laird set up his projector in the back of the store, training it on the portable screen already put up in the yard, then Lov Jenkins helped him run a light through the back door out to the truck, which was parked on the creek side of the yard. It was a large open flatbed truck, with sapling poles sticking up on each side. Some of the prizes, the scarves and dish towels and pan holders, were hanging on the poles, while others were scattered over the shell of overturned crates. The bright red green, and yellow of the prizes shone against the weathered earth color of the truck and the dark wall of trees along the creek.

Alvin edged off from the crowd, leaving Maud laughing and gossiping with a flock of women. He saw Laird stride out of the back door, glance quickly at the screen, the crowd, the truck. Laird's face was drawn tight with worry, and for a moment, Alvin felt that maybe Laird was taking Mama's sickness harder than he let on.

"All right folks," Laird had climbed up on the truck and beaming, he began to wave his arms quieting the crowd. He singled out a talkative man in a blue shirt with red armbands. "Ab," he said, "if you want to entertain the folks, why don't you come up here?" The crowd uttered the man reddened and slunk out of sight.

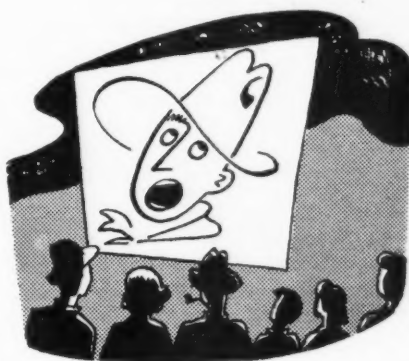
"Well, well," Laird said. "I see we got sportin' men in the crowd tonight, and I tell you what I'm gonna do. Somepun a li'l bit different. I know everybody likes somepun different once in a while, so tonight I'm gonna pass among you with some boxes, and I'm gonna tell you beforehand there ain't a thing in them boxes, no sir, they're just as empty as my head, and you know that: plenty empty. I'm gonna hand out these empty boxes, and you're gonna pay me fifteen cents, and then you're gonna tea off the bottom of the box and write your name on it. I'm gonna put the names in a hat, not my hat mind you, I got a brand new hat, but I'll take old Charley Mauck's hat here and I'm gonna put all the names in it and here's some of the prizes you winners are gonna draw tonight.

He reached behind him and got a white dish towel with a red border. He held it up to his waist, frowning, as though not sure what it was supposed to be used for. A woman began to laugh, and Laird turned to her.

"That's right, Mrs. Sowers. This here's a dish towel. I knowed what it was. I just wanted to see if you knowed. Then we got this pretty glass frame. You can put your pitcher in it, or if you never had your pitcher took, you

can put your Army discharge papers in it, or if you never was in the Army, you can put your marriage license in it, or if you never was married, you can put your birth certificate in it, or if you never was born you can. Well, next we got these red bandanas. Used to sell 'em for ten cents for men's handkerchiefs but then the ladies got to twin 'em around their heads for show, so now they call 'em bandanas and they ask fifty nine cents for 'em. Just goes to show you what happens when the ladies make a show of somepun. Now the grand prize tonight is somepun special mighty special.

Mrs. Sowers, who had known Laird since he was a crawling baby, began to laugh again. Every week Laird said



the grand prize was something special, and of course it was always another factory-made Indian blanket. Laird stopped, stared straight at Mrs. Sowers, pretending great annoyance. The crowd got ready to laugh. Old Laird was going to let her have it.

"I reckon you think you know what the grand prize is," Laird said, and Mrs. Sowers said sure it was one of them old Indian blankets. "Now that's just where you're wrong," Laird said, and he turned back to the crowd. "You see folks, that what comes of bein' too smart for your own good. Our friend here thinks she knows what the grand prize is so she ain't holdin' her breath, waiting like the rest of you. Oh no, she's too smart. Well, this is where she gets the surprise of her life, cause the grand prize tonight now I told you—it was somepun special, the grand prize is a genuine imported lap robe for your car."

Laird held up the Indian blanket, and the crowd cooed its delight. Old Laird had done it again.

"Now remember folks," Laird said, waving a box of candy over his head, "these here're just empty boxes. I'm sellin' tonight."

The children eyed the familiar box,

pricked by a little stab of worry. Maybe the boxes really were empty. But, no, it was just the show man fooling again.

"Who's gonna be the first sport to step up and give me fifteen cents for an empty box?"

Soley Sowers nudged Burr River comb, and Burr held up his hand. "Well," Laird said, handing a box to Burr, "we got one sport anyway." Then the others began to crowd around the truck, mostly children, the grown-ups giving them the money, figuring they ought to buy the candy because Laird didn't charge anything for the show. They knew exactly what was in the boxes, two gumdrops, a hoarhound drop, a licorice whip, and some little prize, a whistle, a package of preserving jar labels, a balloon, or a couple of marbles. The children tore open the boxes, dug for their surprise, then gobbled the candy and traded prizes. The older children wrote the names on the label and put them in the hat. Most of the grown-ups couldn't read or write.

"Now, folks," Laird said when the candy sales began to taper off, "tonight I got a li'l surprise for you. You all been comin' here to the shows and you seen me do my tricks. Well, tonight I'm gonna show you one of the tricks of the trade, gonna show you how to do that knot trick. It's fun to be topped, friends, but it's more fun to know, and once you git the hang of it, you can fool your friends."

Laird motioned the little Slater boy to climb up on the truck. The child's obvious fright appealed to the crowd. They began to clap, reassuringly. Laird ruffled the boy's red hair. "Gonna make a show man outta the boy," Laird said, then he held up two red bandanas, one in each hand. "All right now, folks, here's the way you do it. You tie the bandanas together in a square knot, the tighter the better." Laird tugged at the knot, drawing it tight, then holding it up for the crowd to see. "Once you git your knot good'n tight, you cover it up like this. Fold this end up'n over and then this end, so now you can't see the knot, but you know it's there under them two folded ends. How about it, son? Is the knot still there?"

The Slater boy reached up and took hold of the knot. He nodded shyly. "Still there, huh?" Laird said, then he motioned the boy to take hold of the knotted bandanas. "Now here's the part you watch close," Laird said. He placed his flattened hands about six inches above the bandanas, which the Slater boy was holding. Then he closed his eyes and began to spout a quick, solemn gibberish: "A-bacadabra, rooten-scootenhooten, sisboombab. You hear

that, everybody? Abacadabra, rooten-scootenhooten, sisboombah. All right now, let's see if the knot's still there."

Laird reached down and took the two bandanas from the boy's hand. They were untied. He held them up, one in each hand.

"That's all there is to it, folks. Just say the right words. Now you can all go home and fool your friends."

The crowd, taken in by the fast patter, caught on to the joke. They chuckled, shook their heads. That Laird.

"Lolly said he was havin' a cartoon pitcher tonight," Maud said. Alvin glanced at her curiously. She was sitting on the running board of Laird's car, bent forward, staring at the white screen, a strange shine of excitement in her eyes. "And a singin' cowboy," Maud said.

Laird had the Slater boy shuffle all the names in the hat, then draw the prizewinners. Mrs. Compson won a jar with a fancy glass stopper, and the crowd howled when Laird slyly told her she could keep her elderberry wine in it. Everybody knew how Serena Compson felt about wine. Maud was the last winner. Giggling, she went up to the truck and Laird gave her two red bandanas. "Now you can do the knot trick," Laird said. "Just remember the magic words." Maud, pleased and embarrassed, went back to the running board and sat down. She gave the bandanas to Alvin.

"Now, folks," Laird said, killing the light on the truck, "just settle back in your big easy chairs and enjoy the show."

Darkness had settled slowly over the hills which rimmed the town like the sides of a broken blue saucer, the creek marking the break. Gnats swarmed across the lighted window, and the children, talking in whispers, kept their eyes on the screen, not wanting to miss the start of the picture. A cool breeze stirred the leaves of the sycamores along the creek, and the men leaning against the mottled trunks stared across the vast width of darkness which ended at Hogback Mountain. Above them the stars were like a great scattering of salt crystals on a blue cloth. Suddenly the children began to squeal happily, to whistle and clap their hands, then as suddenly they hushed. The picture show had started.

Afterwards, lying in the brass bed, Maud closed her eyes, and she could see the whole show again, the cartoon picture, the singing cowboy, even the crazy white flashes when Laird was changing the film. The picture mouse kept getting caught in the wire coil, and the big stupid dog backed into an

open fire, then jumped and hit his head against the door and the cowboy sang so loud they must have heard him down at the lime kiln, but it was pretty to listen to, and they made a nice couple, him and the girl. Maud drowsed off, and the singing played in her mind like Laird's phonograph music. When she woke up, she didn't know how many minutes or hours later, she was startled, she sensed at once that Alvin wasn't in bed.

"Alvin?" She saw him standing by the window in his cotton nightshirt. "You sick?"

"No." His body jerked, like a colt shying.

"I git you anything?"

He stood with his back toward her, his hands hidden. "No. I'm all right." He was edgy, a sting in his voice. She lay back, and when he spoke again, after what seemed a long while, he was uncertain, he fumbled, and he still didn't look at her. "I've tried. I've always tried to do what was right. Ain't I, Maud?"

"Why, Alvin, of course you have."

"I've done a lot for people 'round here. They'd still be usin' coal oil lamps if I hadn't gone to the Senator and got the 'lectric lights put in out here, and the same with the phones and the government trees."

"Sure, everybody knows that, and they 'preciate it."

"Nobody's ever said so. They've never even said thank you. But Laird, Laird comes back and tells 'em a joke and shows 'em a picture, and they just can't do enough for 'im. Even my own kids, they hang 'round that trailer like it was a candy counter."

"It's the tricks and the music, and Lolly makes pretty things for the girls."

"Even Mama," he said, speaking into the pale square of window light. "We've made 'er a home, we work the place and pay the bills, but when she's bad off, does she ever ask for us? No, it's Laird'n Lolly. It's always Laird'n Lolly."

"Everything I've ever wanted or worked for," he said, "I've never quite got it, but always it's come to Laird, just handed to 'im, and he's turned his back on it. Why, Maud? Why?"

The room was quiet, with no sound except the idiot screech of the treefrogs.

"I ain't sure of things any more," he said. "I used to be, but not now. I just ain't sure of anything."

As he turned toward her, his face was haggard and tormented. She saw for the first time that he was holding the two bandanas she had won at the show, and she knew what had awakened her, the sound of his clumsy tugging at the knot trick Laird did so easily.

Winners:

November Letter Contest

THE *Literary Cavalcade* letter contest for November brought a host of entries that revealed a wide range of reading interests. We want to thank those of you who wrote and to assure you that your letters were read with pleasure. Here are quotations from two of the prize winners.

First Prize—\$15

"I have never been so captured by a story as I was by Thornton Wilder's excellent play, *Our Town*. There is goodness and wholesomeness in *Our Town*. It is an honest and heart-warming story of the simplicity of human living. Because it is so true and 'down to earth' I really liked it . . .

"If people today could only live as quietly and peacefully as the Gibbs and Webb families in this play, the world would be a better and more decent place in which to live. Instead of greed and hatred in our hearts, we could find room for love of God and our neighbors."

Patricia Braun
Cathedral H.S.
New York City

Second Prize—\$10

"Once in a great while one comes upon a piece of literature which excites and stimulates the reader with its charm and genius. Such a book is *The Old Beauty and Others*, a collection of short stories by the late Willa Cather.

"Never in a collection of short stories have I found such originality and deep understanding of human nature. One actually lives with Miss Cather's characters, shares their sorrows and joys, and bears their little trials with hope, fear, and all the human elements of the heart. The delicious humor and warmth of Miss Cather's pen reveal to the reader life in all its glory, its beauty, its sadness, its bubbling vitality.

"One cannot help feeling enriched spiritually and mentally by this wonderful masterpiece."

Valerie Swirzcki
Albany, New York

The third prize of \$5 was awarded to Cynthia M. Hogan of Evanston (Ill.) Twp. H.S. for the letter she wrote about George Stewart's novel *Storm*.

By S. I. Hayakawa

Author: *Language in Action*

A FRIEND of mine who had had no previous experience in labor activity recently found himself elected to the grievance committee of the union to which he belongs. There were a number of small grievances around the plant in which he worked, so he found himself sent, along with two experienced committee members, to present the workers' complaints to the manager.

A curious thing happened, my friend relates, as soon as they got into the manager's office. His two fellow delegates immediately started talking to the manager in a sullen and aggressive way, as if they were acting in a play the role of Militant-Workers-Demanding-Their-Rights.

The manager didn't know what it was all about. To start with, the delegates hadn't explained to him what the grievances were. Yet he found himself being pushed around and denounced as a pitiless exploiter of the working people. He looked so miserable that my friend, sizing up the situation, took over.

My friend approached the manager in a different way. "Look, Mr. Manager," he began—and he went on to explain the grievances step by step, beginning at the beginning and stating everything clearly, without indignation.

The manager quickly became greatly interested in the grievances. "Is that so?" he would interject. "Why, I didn't know that was happening! . . . Of course, that isn't right. . . . Why hasn't Mr. Peabody brought this to my attention before?" Well, well, well . . . I'll take care of things right away."

"There was nothing to it," my friend explained later. "We had everything settled in ten minutes. But what interested me most was what the manager said to me afterwards. He said that I was the first representative of my union who ever took the trouble to describe the grievances accurately before jumping down his throat."

Now, all workers don't adopt an aggressive attitude in discussing grievances with management. And sometimes it is management that is sullen and aggressive. But the incident, it appeared to me, is an excellent illustration of a semantic principle. It has to do with what semanticists call "levels of abstraction."

In talking about any situation, there are several levels at which it can be



What Are You Talking About?

discussed. First, there is the *descriptive* level, where you try to state accurately, without getting yourself worked up into a lather, what the situation is. For example, "Six employees in the shipping department were not paid for the overtime work they did last month."

Secondly, there is the *inferential* level, where you make some guess as to the reasons for the situation. These guesses may be accurate or not but they are still guesses—inferences. For example, "The employer is trying to defraud his employees." Other guesses are possible, such as, "There was an error in the timekeeper's office," or "There exist differences between the employer's and the employees' definitions of what constitutes overtime."

Thirdly, there is the *judgment* level, where you pass some kind of favorable or unfavorable judgment on the situation. For example, "The employer is a pitiless exploiter of the working class," etc. Where *both* parties to a dispute discuss their differences with each other *only* at the levels of inference and judgment, so that in reply to the charge, "The boss is a mean old skinflint," the employer replies, "The workers are shiftless goldbrickers," *there is no possibility of arriving at agreement.*

The point, then, if you want to save your blood pressure and arrive at agreement with people, is to begin discussion at the *descriptive* level. People have a right to know *what* you are talking

about before learning your inferences and judgments on the subject.

It isn't always easy, however, to separate descriptions from inferences and judgments. When, for example, we see a car weaving dangerously on the highway, how careful are we about reacting to our inferences? Usually we make an inference that the driver is drunk and grow angry about it without being aware that what we are angry about is only an inference—possibly correct, but possibly not.

The science of semantics shows many ways in which untrained habits of thought and speech lead to unnecessary conflict and bitterness. One of the major techniques of clarification and agreement is this matter of starting discussion at the descriptive level, and continuing *often* to check your inferences and judgments against this level.

If more people were to ask now and then, in the course of heated discussions and arguments, "Just what exactly are we talking about?" and if enough people knew how to answer the question, the world would be a quieter place. And easier to live in, too.

● This is the second in a series of articles on semantics written for *Literary Cavalcade*. Dr. Hayakawa was born in Vancouver, B. C. He is now professor of English at the Illinois Institute of Technology and a leading authority on the science of semantics.



Bradley Smith

Craftsmen work all year preparing floats for day of Mardi Gras.



RKO Pathe, Inc.

Lavish costumes for kings and queens are designed many months in advance.

Mardi Gras

An Old New Orleans Custom

● Mardi Gras in New Orleans . . . the big party . . . when schools are closed and Federal, state, and city offices shut tight . . . when a whole city lets go and from dawn to dusk mobs of costumed maskers throng the streets in delirious excitement to watch the Carnival parades with their swirling colors and tableaux and floats. It's an old New Orleans tradition to have a mad good time on Mardi Gras, *Fat Tuesday*, the day before the Lenten season starts. The big parade is on Canal Street, but no neighborhood is without its celebration.

And then there are the balls given by Carnival organizations. The balls begin with a pageant December 26, and from then on almost every night up to Mardi Gras day there is a gay and glittering ball. Membership in Carnival organizations is secret. "Kings" and "Queens" are chosen annually. "Kings" are prominent business or professional men.



Parade floats on Canal Street usually feature historical events, legends of past, or supernatural.

RKO Pathe, Inc.



RKO Pathe, Inc.

Merry-makers vie with each other, see who can create most original costume.



Bradley Smith

Carnival balls are gay, glittering, very elaborate, Midnight, the queen and her court are given a supper.

THE story takes place late in 1943 at a U.S. Army Air Forces bomber base in England. It is known here that three plants deep inside Germany are manufacturing the Lantze-Wolf 1, a new jet plane which, if perfected, might mean victory for the enemy. Brigadier General K. C. ("Casey") Dennis has helped to devise "Operation Stitch," a plan to bomb the three plants with a maximum effort on three successive days. Since this means the B-17s must fly 300 miles beyond the cover of fighter protection it is certain that losses will be tremendous. General Dennis' superior, Major General Roland Kane, is anxious that the Operation be delayed until Congress has approved an appropriation for more planes. He knows that news of great losses might influence public opinion back home and mark an end to precision bombing, something for which

Reprinted from the film script of *Command Decision* by permission of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. Film was directed by Sam Wood and produced by Sidney Franklin in association with Gottfried Reinhardt.

Screen Play by William R. Laidlaw and George Froeschel
Based on the Play by William Wister Haines

he has been fighting most of his professional life. He is especially anxious that the Operation be delayed until after the pending visit of a Congressional committee.

During Kane's absence Casey Dennis is in temporary command, and he takes advantage of a run of good weather to carry out "Operation Stitch." Although Posenleben, the first target, is destroyed, there is a record-breaking loss of 48 bombers.

Technical Sergeant Emanuel T. Evans, Dennis' chief clerk, has orders to keep War Correspondent Elmer Brockhurst and other newsmen off the base, so that this news can be kept secret until the Operation is completed. General Kane, however, returns unexpectedly, bringing with him Brockhurst and Brigadier General Cliff Garnet, who has been sent over from Washington to report on developments. They

arrive after the planes have left on phase two of the Operation—a raid on Schweinhafen.

Ante-Room—General's office. Brockhurst and Evans are alone.

EVANS: Are you the new Commanding General around here?

BROCKHURST (*sits down*): No—just a poor reporter trying to do my job.

EVANS: Poor reporter is right! I thought Dennis told you to keep out of this division.

BROCKHURST (*smiling*): He did.

EVANS: You guys always get what you want from Kane, don't you? Well, the Public Relations Office is right down the hall. The General doesn't want to see you.

BROCKHURST (*smiling*): I don't blame you for being jumpy, Sergeant. . . . Quite a deal, isn't it? Your boss is put in top charge for one day and he loses more planes than General Kane has ever lost in a week.

EVANS (*indifferently*): Maybe he just doesn't like airplanes. (*He busies himself with his papers on his desk.*)

BROCKHURST (*tolerantly*): Maybe he doesn't like their crews, either. Tell me—why has Dennis got a Flight Commander with twenty-one missions confined to quarters at the Thirty-second?

EVANS: Probably for not brushing his teeth.

BROCKHURST (*making a note in his notebook*): Well, that clears up the item of Captain Jenks. (*looking up*) I was erroneously informed that he had refused to fly this hush-hush mission today.

EVANS (*glares at him*): Does that finish your business?

BROCKHURST: Well—I did want to say goodbye to General Dennis before he leaves.

EVANS (*now hooked for the first*



Gen. Dennis (Clark Gable) decides to bomb vital target far beyond fighter cover.

COMMAND

Scenes from the original screen play

time): Goodbye? . . . Who's leaving?

BROCKHURST (smiling): Well—trouble with the press . . . a war hero under arrest . . . record losses just one time too many . . . (affecting casualness) I had a feeling he might be going home.

EVANS (shaking his head deprecatingly): They never fired no general yet till they give him the Legion of Merit.

BROCKHURST: They can give it mighty quick. Gonna miss your hero?

EVANS: No brass is a hero to me. I've done my twenty-five.

At this moment, the door opens and a young captain enters. He seems tense, nervous, hostile

CAPTAIN (sullenly): Captain Jenks to see General Dennis. . . .

Evans flips the key of the squawk box.

EVANS (into squawk box): Captain Jenks reporting sir. (Flips off key; to Jenks) Sit down, Captain. (Jenks sits down nervously.)

Dennis then asks Jenks to come into his office.

Dennis' inner office: Dennis sits behind his desk.

DENNIS: Sit down, Jenks. (Jenks crosses to a chair and sits stiff and suspicious, his whole air betraying an uncompromising, wary attitude.)

DENNIS (pushes a pack of cigarettes toward him): Cigarette?

JENKS: No thanks. (Dennis looks at him a second, then relights his cigar.)

DENNIS (after a moment): I've got a pretty nasty report on you here. . . . I understand that as soon as the target was announced this morning, you slammed out of your group's briefing. . . . Said you wouldn't fly the mission. . . . What's your version of it?

JENKS: I suppose it's true, as far as it goes.

DENNIS (studies him a moment, then): Captain Jenks, it's an old custom of the Service to call your superiors "sir." (The boy glares at him silently.)

DENNIS: All right, we'll skip the manners for the moment . . . (then very earnestly) Do you realize this is serious, boy?

JENKS (flaring up): I'm not going to get killed to make you a record.

DENNIS (deliberately ignoring this): Maybe you've had too much lately. I guess a few days down at Bournemouth wouldn't hurt you any.

JENKS (contemptuously): If you'll look at the bottom of the file, you'll see that I just finished ten days in a rest home . . . sir.

DENNIS (scrutinizes him; then): Tell me—your uncle's on the Military Affairs Committee, isn't he? (Jenks doesn't answer; stares at him defiantly.) Could that have something to do with your behavior?

JENKS: Sure it has! It's lucky I've got somebody to look out for me!

DENNIS: Would you like the boys in your squadron to hear you say that?

JENKS: They feel the same way!

DENNIS: They went this morning.

There is a pause, as Jenks, for the first time nervous, reaches for a cigarette and fumbles a bit lighting it. His voice is thin:

JENKS: Don't give me that, General. My squadron knows I can take it as well as anybody—if I want to. I've been to plenty of tough targets

DENNIS (not without warmth): I know you have. . . . That's why I'm talking to you.

JENKS (blurts out): When do we ever get a chance to talk? (He rises, takes a few nervous steps, then abruptly turns to the desk, facing Dennis; as he talks, he crushes the cigarette in the ash tray) What do you care how we

feel? (He leans closer) Yesterday you lost forty-eight bombers, four hundred and eighty men, by deliberately sending us three hundred miles beyond fighter cover. This morning, when we're entitled to a milk run, you send us even deeper.

DENNIS: Why do you think you're entitled to a milk run?

JENKS: After yesterday's rat race? . . . That was worth twelve milk runs! General Kane promised us some kind of a break. (sits down)

DENNIS: Maybe we'd better call the whole thing off and give Hitler a break. . . .

JENKS (derisively): You really think this is hurting Hitler? This dart game!

DENNIS (quizzically): Is that all you think of our bombardment?

JENKS: Well, what are we doing? Since last April I've been over there twenty-one times! And the fighters and the flak and Germany are just the same as when we started!

DENNIS (quietly): You can't see everything from that left seat, son.

JENKS (bitterly): Oh, I know! We've got strike photos and PRU pictures to prove it. We've got underground intelligence to prove it! (with heavy irony) "And this is a very special mission, gentlemen, and the Eighth Air Force has never yet been turned back from any target by enemy opposition—and flak is only a deterrent anyway!" Yeah! A deterrent to my future! And for what?

DENNIS (he rises, walks around desk and sits on edge of it. Then very earnestly): Suppose I told you that the whole war might depend on what we did yesterday . . . and today . . .

JENKS: That's what your Public Relations will tell us

DENNIS (more curtly—this last impudence has discouraged him from trying much further): You and your crew were one of the lead teams, especially trained for this operation. They needed you there today (Jenks looks down, avoiding Dennis' eyes; Dennis continues relentlessly.) Do you know that we lost two ships from your group this morning during assembly?

JENKS (pales; aghast; then, for the first time, contrite): My crew, sir? (Dennis looks at him for a moment, then picks up the phone.)

DENNIS (into phone): Get me Markington . . . (pause) Markington? . . . Colonel Walker . . . (pause) Hello, Walker? . . . General Dennis speaking. Who did you lose in that collision this morning? (pause) Robinson, eh? . . . Yeah—yeah, I think I know him. . . . Yeah, too bad. . . . Was a good boy . . . Who? . . . Johnson? . . . Oh, Johnston. . . . No, I don't think I do. . . . Well, then neither one

DECISION

was a lead crew . . . (after a pause) Okay—thanks, Walker. (He hangs up. He sits down facing Jenks across the desk. Jenks rises. It obviously takes a great effort for him to control himself.)

JENKS: Robinson, eh? . . . So you knew him! Did you happen to know whether Frank was married or not? . . . Or whether he had any kids? . . . Or where he came from? And you don't remember Red Johnston at all! You don't even know what he looked like!

DENNIS: Take it easy, son!

JENKS (his voice rises in mounting anger): Why should you? . . . He's only got in twenty missions, all over Germany, and he's only been here eight months. You personally gave him his cluster on his D.F.C., after Bremfurt—shook his hand and said "Lieutenant—the Division is proud of you." Proud! Why do you try to remember our names at all? . . . Why don't you just use our serial numbers? . . . Why don't you. . . (Dennis rises in cold anger. He has had enough. A single commanding word bursts from him.)

DENNIS: Captain! (The two men face each other in explosive silence. Then, off scene from the ante-room, we hear:

EVANS' VOICE: 'TENSUN! (Dennis and Jenks look up. The door swings open and Evans holds it ajar.)

EVANS: General Kane and party, sir. (Jenks turns and steps aside, as General Kane enters. Kane is a suave, man-of-the-world type, who nevertheless shows traces of the strength which made him one of the heroes of early flying days. He is followed by Major Prescott, his aide, an officious, social-secretary type who loves his job, and Elmer Brockhurst, who is hanging back near the door.)

KANE: Hello, Casey. . . .

DENNIS: Sorry, sir . . . I wish I'd known you were coming.

KANE: Oh, that's all right, Casey—we just landed at Prestwick a couple of hours ago. I wanted to stop off and see you on the way down.

DENNIS (smiling): How was Washington?

KANE (wearily): About as you'd expect—with that meeting on. . . .

DENNIS (coldly looking at Brockhurst): Is this man with your party, General?

KANE (agreeably): Well, matter of fact, I bumped into Brockie right outside your office.

DENNIS (to Brockhurst): What were you doing on one of my stations, Mr. Brockhurst?

KANE (appeasingly): Now, now, Casey . . . I know you and Brockie had a little misunderstanding . . . That's something I wanted to straighten out with you last week. (Dennis nods to

Jenks, who has been standing near the window.)

DENNIS: All right, Captain—that's all for now. (As Jenks crosses to the door and exits through the anteroom, Kane turns to Dennis.)

KANE (automatically dropping his jovial mask, in a subdued tone): Casey—what have you been doing? . . . You gave me the shock of my life last night.

DENNIS (quietly): I was afraid of that, sir.

KANE (grimly): When we set down at Gander to refuel, Prescott handed me a message from Washington saying you'd lost forty-eight ship.

DENNIS: That's right, sir—forty-eight. KANE: I'd just finished selling the Combined Chiefs on the low cost of daylight bombardment, when you spring these appalling losses on me. (From off scene we hear loud laughter.)

KANE (continuing): Surely you must know . . . (He is stopped by Prescott, who is clearing his throat warningly and looking at the door.)

KANE (to Dennis): That's Cliff Garnet. . . . He flew over with me. Apparently the Chief wants him to look under a few beds (Just then the door which leads to the hall opens and Cliff Garnet enters.)

GARNET (shaking hands with Dennis): How are you, old boy?

DENNIS: Glad to see you, Cliff.

GARNET: I saw Kathy and those youngsters of yours the day before I left.

DENNIS (his face lighting up): Yeah? . . . How are they?

GARNET: Fine, Casey, fine. I've got some letters and packages for you. (The telephone rings.)

The phone call is for General Kane. He answers it, then attempts to patch up the quarrel between Dennis and Brockhurst.

KANE: Now, come on . . . Brockie, don't look so gloomy. I want you and Casey to cut this out. . . . We're all fighting the same war . . . (he turns to Dennis): I've tried to explain to Brockie—that nobody wants to withhold any legitimate information from the press.

DENNIS (dryly): I've seen the way Mr. Brockhurst handles legitimate information.

BROCKHURST (interrupting, but controlling himself; to Dennis): Then you think, sir, that the American public should accept losses, like yesterday's, without even knowing the target?

KANE (to Dennis): Yesterday's communique was pretty skimpy, Casey. (turning to Brockhurst): But, we've certainly nothing to hide. . . . Our loss

average is still far below expectations.

BROCKHURST: Is today going to help it? (Kane and Garnet look at him for the first time apprehensively.)

KANE: What do you mean?

BROCKHURST: Yesterday was a bloody massacre. . . . Won't today be worse?

DENNIS: I don't like your language, Mr. Brockhurst.

BROCKHURST (sarcastically): I'm sorry, General—but even a dumb civilian can tell you've got a maximum effort out today, too. (Kane is now visibly disturbed. He turns to Dennis, speaking in a low tone.)

KANE: What's that, Casey . . . "maximum"? . . . Where did they go today?

DENNIS (looking pointedly from Kane to Brockhurst): I don't think this is a matter for the press, sir.

KANE (impatiently): Look, Casey, Brockie's been a friend of air power for years. What's today's target? (There is a moment's pause, as every eye is glued on Dennis.)

DENNIS (stiffly): Very good, sir . . . Schweinhafen.

KANE (a terrible thought dawning on him): Schweinhafen! . . . And yesterday? (Dennis hesitates, again looking at Brockhurst, then):

DENNIS: Yesterday's target was Posenleben, sir.

KANE (stunned—blurts out): Casey! . . . You haven't started Operation . . .

(He catches himself in the last moment. There is complete silence in the room, as every eye is now fixed on Kane. Slowly he walks to the window where he stands for a moment, deep in thought, with his back to the others. Then he turns around, a grave expression on his face.)

KANE (quietly, to Brockhurst): Brockie, I'm afraid there is a question of security involved in this—if you don't mind . . . (Prescott opens the door for Brockhurst. Brockhurst lingers for a moment, clearly showing his displeasure, then turns and briskly walks out of the room. After the door has closed behind him, Kane turns to Dennis.)

KANE (quietly): Have you begun Operation Stitch?

DENNIS: The second phase is on today, sir. (Kane obviously wilts under the impact of this news. He begins to pace the room agitatedly, then abruptly stops before Prescott.)

KANE: Homer. I don't want that Congressional Committee to come here today. . . . Call London and have their itinerary changed. . . . See that they don't arrive here before the day after tomorrow.

PRESCOTT: Yes, sir. (He walks to the door.)

KANE (calling after him): And cancel that thing at the Embassy.

PRESCOTT: Yes, sir. *(He exits. Then Kane crosses deliberately to Dennis' desk, sits down in Dennis' chair and picks up the phone.)*

KANE *(into phone):* Get me Command Headquarters. This is General Kane—give me General Maloway. Hello, Bob? . . . Oh, pretty good. . . No, I'm at Dennis' headquarters. . . I want a complete security blackout on today's operations. Nothing to be passed to London without my personal approval. . . Under no circumstances will any field order be sent out until you hear from me personally. . . That's right. . . I'm resuming command as of now. . . All right, Bob. *(He hangs up. Thinks for a moment, then looks up at Dennis.)* Casey, this may pull down the work of twenty years. *(He leans back in his chair and, after taking a deep breath, continues.)* All right—let's have it.

DENNIS: The day after you left, sir—the weather conferences gave us a clear break over central and northeast Germany for four days running. . . There was the chance to do the job—and possibly the last one—so I laid on Stitch.

KANE: Regardless of the fact that you might be upsetting the larger picture.

DENNIS: Larger than what, sir. . . the outcome of the war?

KANE: The outcome of the war will depend on how large an air force the Combined Chiefs allocate us here. *(turning to Garnet)* Isn't that correct?

GARNET: I'm afraid it is, sir. You see, Casey, the Chief figures . . .

KANE *(to Dennis, sharply):* You took advantage of my absence. You know very well that it wasn't my intention to implement Stitch this soon.

DENNIS *(evenly):* It was my decision to make, sir—and I made it.

Kane is pleased when word is flashed that the target has been destroyed. His pleasure is completely dissipated, however, when Colonel Ted Martin, leader of the mission, reports that due to an error they mistook another town for Schweinhafen and bombed it instead. The knowledge that 52 bombers have been lost on a mistaken target enrages Kane. He is further angered when he realizes that Dennis regards the mistake as unfortunate, and intends to dispatch a maximum mission to Schweinhafen again the next morning.

Full Shot—Interior Dennis Quarters—Night. It is apparent that Kane, Dennis, Ted Martin, and Garnet have been engaged in a great deal of discussion.

KANE *(exasperated):* Casey, I've spent twenty years working for bombardment. The Chief's spent twenty-five. You kids don't know how we've fought.

MARTIN: No?

KANE: No! I was twelve years a captain, the Chief fourteen. They sent us to Cavalry School. I was the second best pilot in America. . . and they assigned me to keeping records of manure disposal. But we never gave up; we never quit trying. We wrote anything

we could get printed. We got down on our knees to Hollywood for pictures to educate the public. . . and we kept our own fund for the widows. We tested without parachutes—we flew the mail through solid glue in obsolete training planes. The year Herman Goering dominated the Munich conference, our appropriation still wasn't as big as the New York City Public Safety Budget.

MARTIN: Sir, we've all fought all our lives to get an Air Force. Now we've got to protect our beginnings.

KANE: From what?

MARTIN: From the Lantze-Wolt One—tomorrow's air power!

KANE: Those things? They're just our acknowledged enemies. *(He sits down.)* They fight us in the open. Do you realize how much the Navy wants our planes, for sub-patrol. . . and to protect the repairing of those battle-ships that air power couldn't hurt? Do you know how much the Army wants our pilots for Company Commanders? Don't you know the British want us to switch to night area bombardment? Do you know there's a plan to fly infantry supplies into China—with bombers? Don't you realize the fight it's taken for Cliff and the others to get us any planes at all?

GARNET: He's right, Ted.

KANE: Every one of those factions is at the Combined Chiefs of Staff meeting right now with its own pet plan for winning the war: by Naval blockade, or attrition by defensive, or a good sound saber charge. And you want me to send the Chief back in there with nothing but three days of prohibitive losses. *(The telephone rings.)*

DENNIS *(picking up the receiver):* General Dennis. Hello, Davis. *(He listens for a moment, then very impatiently)* Never mind the genealogy! *(Listens again)* Day after tomorrow, eh? . . . Okay—call me as you get it. *(He hangs up and turns to Kane)* There goes our season's weather, sir. We'll make it these next two days or bite our nails off to the elbows.

KANE *(exasperated):* Casey, I appreciate toughness and independence in my subordinates. I like it. But I'm not thinking about the weather—I'm thinking about our whole future—yours, too. The basic decision is at stake now. I can't have you fighting me along with the others.

DENNIS *(not without sympathy):* Woody—If I have to fight you in order to fight the Germans—you don't leave me any choice.

When the committee headed by Congressman Malcolm turns up at the base without warning, Kane orders Dennis



Capt. Jenks *(Michael Steele):* "I'm not going to get killed to make you a record. Why do you try to remember our names? Why don't you just use our serial numbers?"

to cancel "Operation Stitch" and send the planes on a comparatively safe "milk run." He also orders a ceremony prepared in which the Congressman's nephew, Captain Jenks, can be decorated. Dennis reports that Jenks is under arrest for refusing to accompany his crew on the last raid. Kane does not want the Congressman to learn of this, and he makes a deal with Dennis. If Jenks can be decorated, Kane will turn over the command to Dennis temporarily. Kane explains, however, that Dennis must take full responsibility for all losses. Dennis orders the second phase of "Operation Stitch" repeated the following day.

The next day, news comes in that Col. Ted Martin's plane and dozens of others have gone down in flames on this mission. Congressman Malcolm turns on Dennis and accuses him of attempting these dangerous missions for reasons of personal glory.

Dennis' answer to this is an order to prepare for phase three—a raid on Fendelhorst—the following morning. This is too much for Kane. He relieves Dennis of his command and appoints General Garnet to succeed him.

Fade in: Close shot of two feet on desk. Next to them is a marker, reading: "Brigadier General Clifton I Garnet." Camera pulls back to medium shot—the General's office

GARNET: I guess you and I will be together some time, Evans . . . Can you suggest anything else I need?

EVANS: You'll need a new sergeant, sir.

GARNET: What . . . ? Oh, you're going home to work for General Dennis?

EVANS (*bitterly*): No, sir—he wouldn't take me. I guess they use colonels for errand boys in Washington. I've decided to go to Nevada to teach gunnery.

GARNET: You've decided . . . ? What do you think this army is?

EVANS: I'd rather not answer that, sir. But War Department Circular six nine five eight seven dash three says applications from graduate gunners to teach aerial gunnery will be accepted.

GARNET: Well, if the Circular authorizes it. . . . (*Evans makes for door. Garnet checks him.*)

GARNET: EVANS, you *are* a graduate gunner?

EVANS: Yes, sir. Twenty-eight missions.

GARNET: Would it be too much to ask these boys for a tough one tomorrow?

EVANS: (*starting to exit*): I don't know, sir.

GARNET: You must know—from your own experience.



Gen. Dennis replies to Congressman Malcolm (Edward Arnold) as Gen. Kane (Walter Pidgeon) listens: "How did you vote on appropriations for the Air Force in 1938?"

EVANS (*from threshold*): Never had this experience, sir. Nobody in the Army ever asked me anything. They just told me. (*Garnet looks at him for a second, then nods a dismissal. Evans exits. Garnet sits in thought and automatically picks up a model of the jet plane. He looks up, startled, as Captain George Washington Bellpepper Lee enters. Lee is an attractive youngster, somewhat drunk. He salutes with exaggerated formality*)

LEE: Captain Lee reports his presence, sir.

GARNET: Who?

LEE: Captain George Washington Bellpepper Lee, sir

GARNET: Lee, you're drunk.

LEE: Yes, sir. I've come in to report myself for that and to apologize for singing under your window and then running away.

GARNET: Get out of here and go to bed.

LEE: I'm sorry, sir. This hasn't happened before and won't again. (*He salutes, turns to go, but Garnet checks him.*)

GARNET: Lee, did you go to Schweinhafen today?

LEE (*thoughtfully, rather fuddled*): Yes, sir, I went to Schweinhafen today and I went to Schweinhafen yesterday and I went to Posenleben Friday and I've been to Hamburg . . . and Bremen . . . and Kiel . . . and Schweinfurt and Regensburg. . . . (*Stops, horrified at himself*) Excuse me, sir. I only meant to say I'd been to twenty-four of them without taking a drink and I'm ashamed of myself for singing under your window on Easter Sunday.

GARNET: You go to bed, Lee. It's all right . . . even if it isn't Easter Sunday.

LEE: Beg your pardon, sir. It's my Easter Sunday.

GARNET: Yours?

LEE: Yes, sir. Resurrection, sir. Today was my twenty-fourth. All I've got to do now is knock off one more little milk run and then go home and live the rest of my life.

GARNET: Oh, Well, don't behave like this at home.

LEE: I wouldn't think of it, sir. I'm going to get married.

GARNET: Well, congratulations!

LEE: Yes, sir. We almost did before I came over—but I thought . . . I thought she'd worry more that way.

GARNET: I see. Now get to bed and the best of luck.

LEE: Thank you, sir. And Happy Easter to you, sir. (*Lee exits, leaving Garnet to think that one over. Major Lansing enters, shirt sleeves rolled up, hands filled with pictures and target folders under his arms.*)

LANSING: Here are the folders on those channel port targets, General. . . . (*putting them down on the desk*) Calais . . . Dunkirk . . . Brest . . . (*Garnet opens one of the folders and looks into it, then looks up at Lansing.*)

GARNET (*indicating pictures*): What are those?

LANSING: These are pictures from the last Group over Schweinhafen today, sir. (*He points at one of the photos*) Look at these hits on the main milling shop. They did a wonderful job!

GARNET: Then it's complete?



Gen. Garnet (Brian Donlevy): "You and I will be together some time. Can you suggest anything else I need?" Sgt. Evans (Van Johnson): "You'll need a new sergeant, sir."

LANSING: Schweinhafen's complete, sir.

GARNET: I see. Nothing more on Colonel Martin?

LANSING: No, sir.

GARNET (eyeing the pictures): I wish he could know what he did.

LANSING: Yes, but I'm glad he doesn't know we're not finishing the job.

GARNET: That's not in our hands, Major.

LANSING: I understand that, sir.

GARNET (after a pause, again toying with the model jet plane): Major, I'd like to ask you a question.

LANSING: Yes, sir.

GARNET: If you had to decide tomorrow's mission . . . for General Kane . . . would you attack Fendelhorst?

LANSING: Fendelhorst, sir! I'm thankful I don't have to decide that.

GARNET: But if you did?

LANSING: Sir, I'm afraid my decision would be influenced by a personal reason.

GARNET: May I ask what that is?

LANSING: General, I regret intruding this upon your consideration. Since you ask me, I have a son, training now in a Combat Infantry Division, Assault . . . (Points to the model of the jet plane) When those jets have stopped our bombardment they'll make the deadliest strafing planes ever used against ground troops. I'm sorry, sir, but I'm afraid I couldn't help thinking of my boy going up a beach against them.

GARNET: Yes . . . but what if your boy were flying a bomber tomorrow?

LANSING: I hope I would send him to

Fendelhorst, sir. (Just then Colonel Haley enters.)

HALEY (announcing): Message from General Kane, sir.

GARNET: Good . . . Read it.

HALEY (reading): "General Kane compelled to attend Ambassador's dinner for Congressmen, London. Pursuant to directive, selection of tomorrow's target will be responsibility of senior division commander. General Kane desires express confidence in General Garnet's discretion based on weather. Signed Maloway—for Kane."

Dennis drops in on Garnet to say goodbye.

GARNET: Casey—you can't run out on me . . . What am I going to do?

DENNIS: You're going to command, Clifton—and you'll be paid the first of every month. (Buttons his coat.)

GARNET (crossing over to him): I—er—I had a boy in here tonight—a pilot . . . Nice attractive kid with a lot of guts . . .

DENNIS: They're all nice attractive kids with a lot of guts.

GARNET: I know—but this one was a little drunk.

DENNIS: They don't mean any harm . . . Best thing is to let the M.P.s throw them into bed.

GARNET: Oh, he wasn't that drunk . . . He gave me kind of a personal slant.

DENNIS: This job hasn't any room for a personal slant, Cliff . . .

GARNET: Casey—what's happened to you?

DENNIS: The same thing that's going

to happen to you. (Takes a breath) The sooner I get out of here, the sooner you can get to work. (He starts for the door. Garnet stops him.)

GARNET: If you'll help me just this once. . . .

CASEY: It isn't just this once. . . . It's from now on.

GARNET: Yeah—but when you first came over here, you had Ted to talk to, at least . . .

DENNIS: Yes—I had Ted. . . . That's one thing I've done for you, Cliff. . . . I've killed Ted . . . You won't have to do that.

GARNET (scrutinizes him for a moment—then quietly): Casey—you've hated this—every minute of it . . .

DENNIS: Oh, I've had worse commands. . . . You can be glad you didn't have to run a group—that is personal. You see them at meals and you get to know a lot of them. It's rough enough here, when you have to start counting in the really bad one you ordered yourself. You'll find you get the faces all mixed up sometimes—the kids just coming in on the replacement trucks and the ones you've already killed. . . . But then, when you start feeling sorry for yourself, think of what they've got to go through. There's only one thing you can really do for them, Cliff. . . . Make every one of them count . . . See that they're not used up for nothing . . . Maybe you can keep their kid brothers from coming over here. (There is a pause, as the two men look at each other. At this moment, the door opens and Haley enters, carrying a paper.)

DENNIS (stopping him): Earnie—how did my goodbye presents to the boys finally average out?

HALEY: The losses were—twenty four per cent Friday, twenty-six per cent yesterday and twenty-nine per cent today, sir.

GARNET (looks at Dennis): Quite a difference between those and the channel ports, eh, Casey?

DENNIS: Many differences, Cliff. (Garnet looks at Dennis for a second, then turns away, gets up and crosses to the map. He stops before it, gazing at it in silence for a moment.)

GARNET (in a low voice): Haley, notify the other Divisions and all our Groups that tomorrow the Fifth Division will attack Fendelhorst.

DENNIS (smiling—extending his hand): General—good luck (Garnet takes it—they shake hands.)

A message arrives from Washington that General Dennis' orders have been countermanded. He is to report to the Pacific, probably to head a B-29 unit. With Sgt. Evans, he heads for his new command.

The suspense-packed story of a battle with a ferocious and cunning enemy

Book condensation in the author's own words

By Jim Corbett

The Man-Eating Leopard of Rudraprayag

The Man-Eater

WHEN an animal, be it a leopard or be it a tiger, becomes a man-eater, it is given a place name for purposes of identification. It was quite natural, therefore, for the leopard that started his man-eating career at a small village twelve miles from Rudraprayag on the Kedarnath pilgrim route to have been given the name of Rudraprayag, and to have been known for the rest of its career as the "Man-Eating Leopard of Rudraprayag."

Leopards do not become man-eaters for the same reasons that tigers do. Though I hate to admit it, our leopards—the most beautiful and the most graceful of all the animals in our jungles, and who when cornered or wounded are second to none in courage—are scavengers to the extent that they will, when driven by hunger, eat any dead thing they find in the jungle.

The people of Garhwal are Hindus and, as such, cremate their dead. The cremation invariably takes place on the bank of a stream or river, in order that the ashes may be washed down into the Ganges and eventually into the sea. In normal times these rites are carried out very effectively; but when disease in epidemic form sweeps through the hills, and the inhabitants die faster than they can be disposed of, a very simple rite, which consists of placing a live coal in the mouth of the deceased, is performed in the village, and the body is then carried to the edge of the hill and cast into the valley below.

From The Man-Eating Leopard of Rudraprayag, by Jim Corbett. Copyright 1948 by Oxford University Press, Inc.

A leopard in an area in which his natural food is scarce, when he finds these bodies, very soon acquires a taste for human flesh, and when the disease dies down and normal conditions are re-established, he very naturally, on discovering his food supply has been cut off, takes to killing human beings. In the wave of epidemic influenza that swept through the country in 1918 and cost India over a million lives, Garhwal suffered very severely, and it was at the end of this epidemic that the Garhwal man-eater made his appearance.

The first human kill credited to the Man-Eating Leopard of Rudraprayag is recorded as having taken place at Bainji village on 9 June 1918, and the last kill for which he was responsible took place at Bhainswara village on 14 April 1926. Between these two dates the number of human kills recorded by the Government was 125.

This leopard was the most publicized animal that has ever lived, for he was mentioned—to my knowledge—in the press of the United Kingdom, America, Canada, South Africa, Kenya, Malaya, Hong Kong, Australia, New Zealand, and in most of the dailies and weeklies in India.

Terror

The word "terror" is so generally and universally used in connection with everyday trivial matters that it often fails to convey, when intended to do so, its real meaning. I should like, therefore, to give you some idea of what terror—real terror—meant to the fifty thousand inhabitants living in the five hundred square miles of Garhwal in which the man-eater was operating.

No curfew order has ever been more strictly enforced or more implicitly obeyed than the curfew imposed by the Man-Eating Leopard of Rudraprayag.

During the hours of sunlight, life in that area was carried on in a normal way. As the sun approached the western horizon and the shadows lengthened, the behavior of the entire population of the area underwent a very sudden change. Men who had sauntered to the bazaars or to outlying villages were hurrying home; women carrying great bundles of grass were stumbling down the steep mountainsides; children who had loitered on their way from school, or who were late in bringing in their flocks of goats, were being called by anxious mothers; and the weary pilgrims were being urged to hurry to shelter.

When night came an ominous silence brooded over the whole area. The entire local population was behind fast-closed doors—in many cases, for further protection, with additional doors to the existing outer ones—and those pilgrims who had not been fortunate enough to find accommodation in houses were huddled close together in pilgrim shelters. Whether in house or in shelter all were silent, for fear of attracting the dreaded man-eater.

Following are a few instances that show what grounds there were for that terror.

A boy, a fourteen-year-old orphan, was employed to look after a flock of forty goats. He was of the depressed-untouchable-class and each evening when he returned with his charges he

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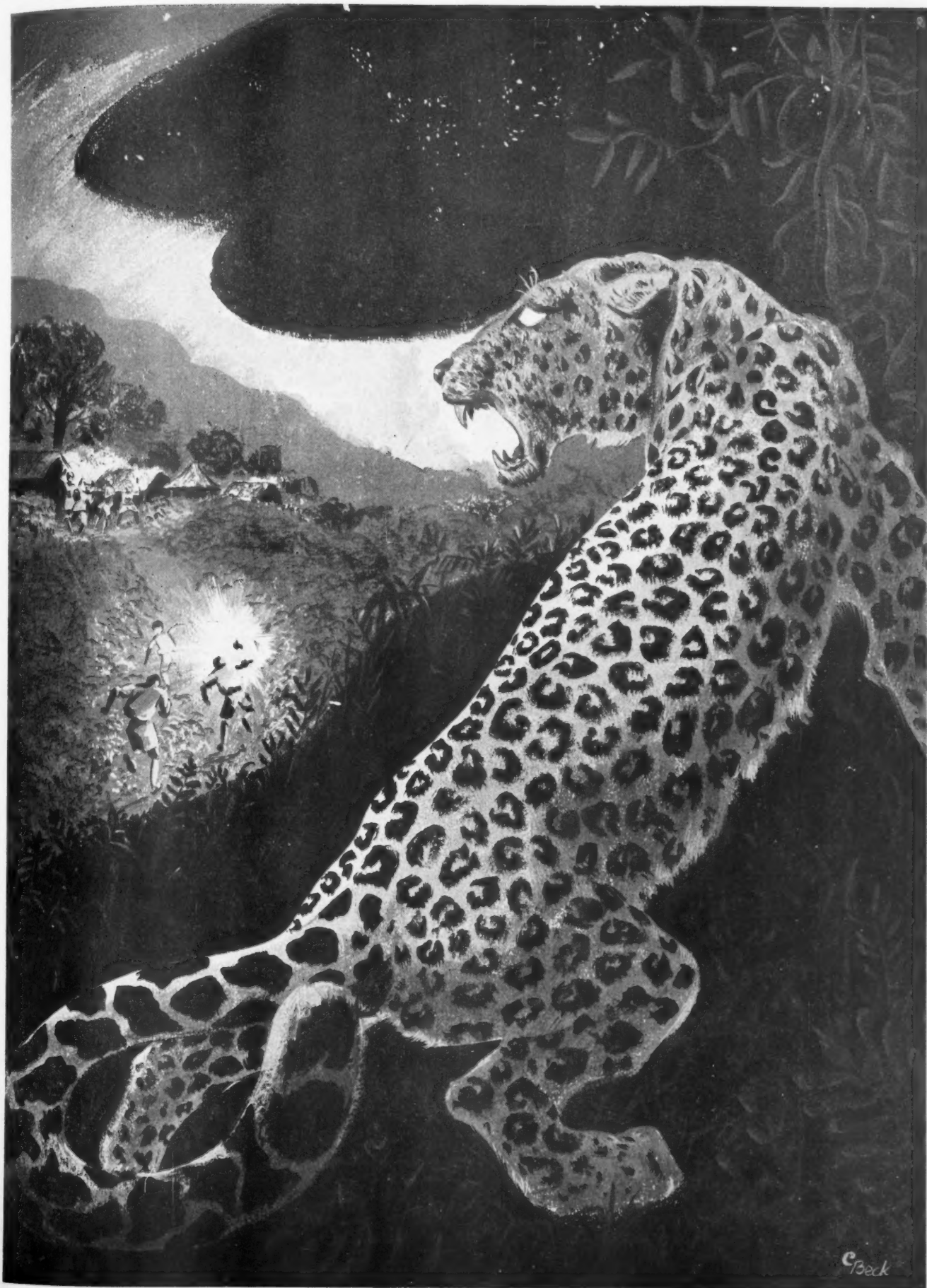
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was given his food and then shut into a small room with the goats. The room was on the ground floor of a long row of two-story buildings and was immediately below the room occupied by the boy's master, the owner of the goats. To prevent the goats' crowding in on him as he slept, the boy had fenced off the far left-hand corner of the room.

This room had no windows and only the one door, and when the boy and the goats were safely inside, the boy's master pulled the door to and fastened it by passing the hasp, which was attached by a short length of chain to the door, over the staple fixed in the lintel. A piece of wood was then inserted in the staple to keep the hasp in place, and on his side of the door the boy, for his better safety, rolled a stone against it.

On the night the orphan was gathered to his fathers, his master asserts the door was fastened as usual, and I have no reason to question the truth of his assertion, for the door showed many deep claw marks. It is possible that in his attempts to claw open the door the leopard displaced the piece of wood that was keeping the hasp in place, after which it would have been easy for him to push the stone aside and enter the room.

After killing the boy in the fenced-off corner, the leopard carried him across the room—now empty of goats, which had escaped into the night—down a steep hillside and then over some terraced fields to a deep boulder-strewn ravine. It was here after the sun had been up a few hours that the master found all that the leopard had left of his servant.

Not one of the forty goats had received so much as a scratch.

The wife of the headman of a village was ill of a fever and two friends had been called in to nurse her.

There were two rooms in the house. The outer room had two doors, one opening onto a small flagged courtyard, and the other leading into the inner room. This outer room also had a narrow slip of a window set some four feet above floor level, and in this window, which was open, stood a large brass vessel containing drinking water for the sick woman.

Except for the one door giving access to the outer room the inner room had no other opening in any of its four walls. The door leading out onto the courtyard was shut and securely fastened, and the door between the two rooms was wide open.

The three women in the inner room were lying on the ground, the sick wo-

man in the middle with a friend on either side of her. The husband was on a bed in the outer room, on the side of the room nearest the window, and on the floor beside his bed, where its light would shine into the inner room, was a lantern, turned low to conserve oil.

Round about midnight, when the occupants of both rooms were asleep, the leopard entered by way of the narrow slip of a window, avoiding in some miraculous way the brass vessel that nearly filled it; he skirted round the



man's low bed and, entering the inner room, killed the sick woman. It was only when the heavy brass vessel crashed to the floor as the leopard attempted to lift his victim through the window that the sleepers awoke.

I could go on and on, for there were many kills, and each one has its own tragic story, but I think I have said enough to convince you that the people of Garhwal had ample reason to be terrified of the Man-Eating Leopard of Rudraprayag. Garhwalis as a whole are intensely superstitious and added to their fear of physical contact with the leopard was their even greater fear of the supernatural.

I have lived too long in silent places to be imaginative, even so, there were times a-many during the months I spent at Rudraprayag, when sitting night after night on one occasion for twenty-eight nights in succession—watching bridges or crossroads, or approaches to villages, or over animal or human kills, when I could imagine the man-eater as being a big light-colored animal, for so he had appeared to me the first time I saw him—with the body of a leopard and the head of a fiend.

A fiend who while watching me through the long night hours, rocked and rolled with silent baleful laughter at my vain attempt to outwit him, and licked his lips in anticipation of the time when, finding me off my guard for one brief moment, he would get the opportunity he was waiting for, to bury his teeth in my throat.

Arrival

It was during one of the intermissions of Gilbert and Sullivan's *Yeoman*

of the Guard, which was showing at the Chalet Theatre in Naini Tal in 1925, that I first had any definite news of the Rudraprayag man-eater.

I heard Michael Keene—then Chief Secretary to the Government of the United Provinces and later Governor of Assam—telling a group of men about the man-eater, and trying to persuade them to go after it. His appeal, judging from the remark of one of the group and endorsed by the others, was not received with any enthusiasm. The remark was, "Go after a man-eater that has killed a hundred people? Not on your life."

Next morning I paid Michael Keene a visit and got all the particulars I wanted. He was not able to tell me exactly where the man-eater was operating, and suggested my going to Rudraprayag and getting in touch with Ibbotson. On my return home I found a letter from Ibbotson on my table.

Ibbotson—now Sir William Ibbotson, and lately Adviser to His Excellency the Governor of the United Provinces—had very recently been posted to Garhwal as Deputy Commissioner, and one of his first acts had been to try and rid his district of the man-eater. It was in this connection that he had written.

Man-eating leopards are of rare occurrence, and for this reason very little is known about them. My own experience of these animals was very limited, and though I suspected that the change-over from animal to human-and-animal diet would affect the habits of a leopard as much as it does those of a tiger, I did not know to what extent. Until I did, I decided to try and kill the man-eater by the methods usually employed for killing leopards.

The most common method of killing leopards is to sit up for them, either over a kill or over live bait in the form of a goat or a sheep. To carry out either method it is necessary in the one case to find a kill, and in the other to locate the quarry.

My object in going to Rudraprayag was to try and prevent further loss of human life, and I had no intention of waiting for another human kill to occur, over which I could sit; therefore, the obvious thing to do was to locate the man-eater and shoot him over live bait.

Here a formidable difficulty presented itself, which I hoped in time partly to overcome. From the maps I had been supplied with, I found that the man-eater was operating over an area of roughly five hundred square miles. Five hundred square miles of country anywhere would have been a considerable area in which to find and shoot any animal, and in this mountainous and rugged part of Garhwal the

task of finding an animal that only operated at night appeared, at first glance, to be well-nigh impossible—until I took the Alaknanda River, which divided the area into two more or less equal parts, into consideration.

It was generally believed that the Alaknanda offered no obstacle to the man-eater and that when he found it difficult to obtain a human kill on one bank, he crossed over to the other bank by swimming the river.

I discounted this belief. In my opinion no leopard would in any circumstances voluntarily commit itself to the swift-flowing ice-cold waters of the Alaknanda, and I was convinced that when the man-eater crossed from one bank to the other, he did so by one of the suspension bridges.

There were two suspension bridges in the area, one at Rudraprayag, and the other about twelve miles further up the river, at Chatwapipal.

I felt sure that if I could close them against the leopard I should be able to confine him to one side of the Alaknanda, and so reduce by half the area in which to look for him.

The first thing, therefore, was to try and find out on which bank of the river the leopard was. No photographs by which I could identify the man-eater by his pug marks were available and I decided to treat all leopards as suspect.

The day I arrived at Rudraprayag I purchased two goats. One of these goats I tied up the following evening, a mile up the pilgrim road; the other I took across the Alaknanda and tied up on a path running through some heavy scrub jungle, where I found the old pug marks of a big male leopard. On visiting the goats the following morning I found the one across the river had been killed, and a small portion of it eaten.

I received no news about the man-eater during the day, so decided to sit up over the dead goat, and at 3 p.m. took up my position in the branches of a small tree about fifty yards from the kill. During the three hours I sat in the tree I had no indication, from either animals or birds, that the leopard was in the vicinity, and as dusk was falling I slipped off the tree, cut the cord tethering the goat, and set off for the inspection bungalow.

From the time I left the tree until I reached the bungalow, I took every precaution to guard against a sudden attack—and it was fortunate that I did.

I made an early start next morning and near the gate of the bungalow I picked up the tracks of a big male leopard. These tracks I followed back to a densely wooded ravine that crossed the path close to where the

goat was lying. The goat had not been touched during the night.

The leopard that had followed me could have only been the man-eater, and for the rest of the day I walked as many miles as my legs would carry me, warning all the people in the villages I visited, and all whom I met on the roads, that the man-eater was on our side of the river.

Next day just as I was finishing breakfast a very agitated man dashed into the bungalow to tell me that a woman had been killed by the man-eater the previous night in a village on the hill above the bungalow.

Within a few minutes I collected all the things that I needed—a spare rifle and shotgun, cartridges, rope, and a length of fishing line—and set off up the steep hill accompanied by the villager and two of my men.

The body lay in a ravine at one end of a narrow terraced field, at the other end of which, some forty yards away, was a leafless and stunted walnut tree in whose branches a hayrick had been built, some four feet from the ground and about six feet tall. In this hayrick I decided to sit.



Starting near the body, a narrow path ran down into the ravine. On this path were the pug marks of the leopard, and they were identical with the pug marks of the leopard that had followed me two nights previously from the goat kill to the Rudraprayag bungalow. The pug marks were of an out-sized male leopard long past his prime, with a slight defect where a bullet fired four years previously had creased the pad of his left hind paw.

Procuring two stout eight-foot-long bamboos from the village, I drove them into the ground close to the perpendicular bank that divided the field in which the body was lying from the field below, and tied my spare rifle and shotgun securely to them. To the triggers I tied lengths of dressed-silk fishing line and, looping the lines back over the trigger guards, fastened them to two stakes driven into the hillside on the far side of and a little above the path. If the leopard came along the path he had used the previous night, there was a reasonable chance of his pulling on the lines and shooting himself; on the other

hand, if he avoided them or came by any other way, and I fired at him while he was on the kill, he would be almost certain to run into the trap, for that was his most natural line of retreat. To give me an idea of the direction in which to fire I took a slab of white rock from the ravine and put it on the edge of the field, about a foot from the near side of the body.

My ground arrangements completed, I made myself a comfortable seat on the rick. As I was facing the kill and had my back to the tree, there was little chance of the leopard's seeing me, no matter at what time he came; and that he would come during the night, in spite of his reputation of not returning to his kills, I was firmly convinced.

To me, who have spent so much of my life in the open, the night is never dark, unless the sky is overcast. I had placed the white stone near the body only as a precaution, for I hoped that the starlight, with the added reflection from the snowy mountain range, would give me sufficient light by which to shoot. But my luck was out—or rather, the luck of the people of Garhwal—for night had hardly fallen when there was a flash of lightning, followed by distant thunder, and in a few minutes the sky was heavily overcast. Just as the first big drops of a deluge began to fall, I heard a stone roll into the ravine, and a minute later the loose straw on the ground below me was being scratched up.

The leopard had arrived; and while I sat in torrential rain with the ice-cold wind whistling through my wet clothes, he lay dry and snug in the straw below. The storm was one of the worst I have ever experienced, and while it was at its height I saw a lantern being carried towards the village, and marveled at the courage of the man who carried it. It was not until some hours later that I learned the man who so gallantly braved both the leopard and the storm had done a forced march of over thirty miles from Pauri to bring me the electric night-shooting light that the Government had promised me. The arrival of this light three short hours earlier might—but regrets are vain.

The rain was soon over—leaving me chilled to the bone—and the clouds were breaking up, when the white stone was suddenly obscured, and a little later I heard the leopard eating. Ten minutes later the stone was visible, and almost immediately thereafter I heard a sound below me, and saw the leopard as a light-yellowish object disappearing under the rick. The sound he made when walking was like the soft rustle of a woman's silk dress.

Waiting a suitable length of time, I

raised the rifle and covered the stone, intending to fire the moment it was again obscured; but there is a limit to the time a heavy rifle can be held to the shoulder, and when the limit had been reached I lowered the rifle to ease my aching muscles. I had hardly done so when the stone for the second time disappeared from view. Three times within the next two hours the same thing happened, and in desperation as I heard the leopard approaching the rick for the fourth time, I leaned over and fired at the indistinct object below me.

I saw no more of the leopard that night, and at sunrise I collected my men and set off down the steep hill to Rudraprayag.

Preparations

The first thing to do was to find out if the leopard had crossed the Alaknanda, and as I was firm in my conviction that the only way he could do this was by way of the suspension bridges, I set out after breakfast to glean this information. I decided to confine my search to the Rudraprayag bridge.

There were three approaches to the bridge. After examining these approaches very carefully, I crossed the bridge and examined the Kedarnath pilgrim road for half a mile, and then the footpath on which three nights before my goat had been killed. Satisfied that the leopard had not crossed the river, I determined to put into operation my plan for closing the two bridges at night and thus confining the leopard to my side of the river.

The bridges were closed by wedging thorn bushes in the four-foot-wide archway in the towers carrying the steel cables from which the plank footway was suspended.

I spent in all some twenty nights on the tower on the left bank of the Rudraprayag bridge, and those nights will never be forgotten. The tower was built out on a projecting rock and was twenty feet high, and the platform on the top of it, which had been worn smooth by the wind, was about four feet wide and eight feet long.

All the rivers in this part of the Himalayas flow from north to south, and in the valleys through which they flow a wind blows that changes direction with the rising and the setting of the sun.

During the hour at which I took up my position on the platform there was usually a lull in the wind, but shortly thereafter it started blowing as a light zephyr, gaining in strength as daylight faded, and mounting by midnight to a raging gale. With no hand-hold on the platform, and even when lying flat

About the author . . .

● Most of Jim Corbett's life has been spent deep in the Kumaon hills of the Himalayas, where he was born in 1875 and attended an English boys' school. In 1924 he was able to free himself of business obligations and devote unlimited leisure to big-game hunting in India and Africa. His first book was *Man Eaters of Kumaon*. This is his second. He is now at work on a third.

on my stomach to increase friction and reduce wind pressure, there was imminent risk of being blown off the platform onto the rocks sixty feet below, off which I would have bounced into the ice-cold Alaknanda. Added to the discomfort of the wind, I suffered torment from a multitude of small ants, which, entering my clothes, ate away patches of skin. During the twenty nights I guarded the bridge, the thorn bushes were not placed in position, and in all that long period the bridge was only crossed by one living thing—a jackal.

While I was still guarding the bridge Ibbotson and his wife Jean arrived from Pauri. A few days after the arrival of the Ibbotsons, news was brought that a cow had been killed in a village two miles from Rudraprayag.

A day or two later, another cow was reported to have been killed in a small village on the hill a few hundred yards from the bungalow.

Two nights later another cow was killed a few hundred yards above the Rudraprayag bazaar.

On the very edge of a hill, and about twenty yards from where the dead cow was lying, there was a fair sized tree, in the upper branches of which a hayrick had been built. On this natural *machan* [platform used for observation]—from which there was a sheer drop of several hundred feet into the valley below—Ibbotson and I decided to sit.

To assist in killing the man-eater, the Government had sent us a gin trap. This trap, which was five feet long and weighed eighty pounds, was the most fearsome thing of its kind I have ever seen. Its jaws, armed with sharp teeth three inches long, had a spread of twenty-four inches and were actuated by two powerful springs, which needed two men to compress them. When leaving the kill the leopard had followed a footpath across a field about forty yards wide, up a three-foot bank, and across another field bordered by a densely scrub-covered hill. At this three-foot step from the upper to the lower field,

we set the trap and, to insure the leopard's stepping on to it, we planted a few thorn twigs on either side of the path. To one end of the trap was attached a chain, terminating in a ring; through this ring we drove a stout peg, chaining the trap to the ground.

When these arrangements had been completed, Jean Ibbotson returned to the bungalow with our men, and Ibbotson and I climbed up to the hayrick.

As evening closed in, heavy clouds spread over the sky, and as the moon was not due to rise until 9 p.m. we had to depend on the electric light for the accuracy of our shooting. This light was a heavy and cumbersome affair, and as Ibbotson insisted on my taking the shot, I attached it to my rifle.

An hour after dark a succession of angry roars apprised us of the fact that the leopard was in the trap. Switching on the electric light, I saw the leopard rearing up with the trap dangling from his forelegs, and taking a hurried shot, my bullet struck a link in the chain and severed it.

Freed from the peg, the leopard went along the field in a series of great leaps, carrying the trap in front of him, followed up by the bullet from my left barrel and two lethal bullets from Ibbotson's shotgun, all of which missed him. In trying to reload my rifle, I displaced some part of the light, after which it refused to function.

Hearing the roars of the leopard and our four shots, the people in the Rudraprayag bazaar and in nearby villages swarmed out of their houses, carrying lanterns and pine torches, and converged from all sides on the isolated house. Shouting to them to keep clear was of no avail, for they were making so much noise that they could not hear us. So while I climbed down the tree, taking my rifle with me—a hazardous proceeding in the dark—Ibbotson lit and pumped up the gasoline lamp we had taken into the *machan* with us. Letting the lamp down to me on the end of a length of rope, Ibbotson joined me on the ground, and together we went in the direction the leopard had taken. Halfway along the field there was a hump caused by an outcrop or rock. Beyond the hump was a little depression, and crouching down in this depression, and facing us and growling, was the leopard. Within a few minutes of my bullet's crashing into his head, we were surrounded by an excited crowd, who literally danced with joy round their long-dreaded enemy.

The animal that lay dead before me was an outsized male leopard, who the previous night had tried to tear down a partition to get at a human being, who had been shot in an area in which

dozens of human beings had been killed—all good reasons for assuming that he was the man-eater. But I could not make myself believe that he was the same animal I had seen the night I sat over the body of the woman. True, I had only vaguely seen the outline of the leopard. Even so, I was convinced that the animal now being lashed to a pole by willing hands was not the man-eater.

With the Ibbotsons leading the way, followed by the men carrying the leopard and a crowd of several hundred men, we set off for the bungalow.

I stumbled down the hill in the wake of the procession—the only one who did not believe that the Man-Eating Leopard of Rudraprayag was dead.

Both during dinner and long after it, the Ibbotsons and I put forward our arguments for and against the dead leopard's being the man-eater. Eventually, without either side convincing the other, we decided that as Ibbotson had to get back to his work at Pauri, and I was tired out after my long stay at Rudraprayag, we would spend the next day in skinning the leopard, and on the day after would break camp.

The next day, from early morning to late evening, relays of men kept coming from near and distant villages to see the leopard, and as most of these men asserted that they recognized the animal as the man-eater, the Ibbotsons' conviction grew that they were right and I was wrong.

We went to bed early that night, for we were to start at daybreak next morning. I was up while it was still dark and was having *chota hazri* [breakfast], when I heard voices on the road. As this was very unusual, I called out to ask what men were doing on the road at that hour; on seeing me, four men climbed up the path to my camp and informed me they had been sent by the *Patwari* [village registrar] to tell me that a girl had been killed by the man-eater on the far side of the river, about a mile from the Chatwapipal bridge.

The Hunters Hunted

Ibbotson and I set off on two of his horses. We took our rifles, a blue-flame stove, a gasoline lamp, and some provisions, and were accompanied by one of Ibbotson's grooms on a borrowed horse carrying food for our horses.

We left the horses at Chatwapipal bridge. This bridge had not been closed the night we shot the leopard, with the result that the man-eater had got across the river and secured a kill at the first village he visited.

A guide waiting for us at the bridge took us up a very steep ridge and along

a grassy hillside, and then down into a deep and densely wooded ravine with a small stream flowing through it. Here we found the *Patwari* and some twenty men guarding the kill.

At about four o'clock we went down to sit over the kill, taking the gasoline lamp and night-shooting light with us.

It was reasonable to assume that the leopard had heard the noise the villagers made when searching for the girl and later when guarding the body, and that if he returned to the kill he would do so with great caution; so we decided not to sit near the kill, and selected a tree about sixty yards away on a hill overlooking the glade.

This tree was growing out of the hill at almost a right angle, and, after we had hidden the gasoline lamp in a little hollow, Ibbotson took his seat in a fork of the tree from which he had a clear view of the kill, while I sat with my back to him and facing the hill. Ibbotson was to take the shot, while I saw to our safety. As the shooting light was not functioning, our plan was to sit up as long as Ibbotson could see to shoot, and then, with the help of the gasoline lamp, get back to the village.

The villagers had informed us that there was heavy jungle to the east, to which they felt sure the leopard had retired when they drove him off the kill. If the leopard came from this direction, Ibbotson would see him long before the animal got to the glade and would get an easy shot, for his rifle was fitted with a telescopic sight; this not only made for accurate shooting,

but also added—as we had found from tests—half an hour to the light factor, which on an occasion like this was very important.

The sun was setting behind the high hills to the west, and we had been in shadow for some minutes, when a *kakar* [barking deer] dashed down the hill, barking, from the direction in which we had been told there was heavy jungle.

The *kakar* had undoubtedly been alarmed by a leopard. When I looked round at Ibbotson, I saw that he, too, was keyed up, and that he had both hands on his rifle.

Light was beginning to fade, but was good enough to shoot by even without the aid of the telescopic sight, when a pine cone dislodged from behind some low bushes, about thirty yards immediately above us, came rolling down the hill and struck the tree close to my feet. The leopard had arrived and, possibly suspecting danger, had taken a line that would enable him to prospect from a safe place on the hill all the ground in the vicinity of his kill. Unfortunately, in doing so he had got our tree in a direct line with the kill, and though I, who was showing no outline, might escape observation, he would be certain to see Ibbotson, who was sitting in a fork of the tree.

When sufficient light for me to shoot by had long since gone, and Ibbotson's telescopic sight was no longer of any use to him, we heard the leopard coming stealthily down towards the tree. It was then time to take action, so I asked



Ibbotson to take my place, while I retrieved the lamp.

I am a little taller than Ibbotson, and suggested that I should carry the lamp, but Ibbotson said he could manage all right, and, further, he would rather depend on my rifle than his own. So we set off, Ibbotson leading, I following.

Fifty yards from the tree, while climbing over a rock, Ibbotson slipped, the base of the lamp came in violent contact with the rock, and the mantle fell in dust to the bottom of the lamp. The streak of blue flame, directed from the nozzle onto the gasoline reservoir, gave sufficient light for us to see where to put our feet, but it was a question how long we would have even this much light. Ibbotson was of the opinion that he could carry the lamp for three minutes before it burst; three minutes to do a stiff climb of half a mile, over ground on which it was necessary to change direction every few steps to avoid huge rocks and thorn bushes, and possibly followed—actually followed, as we found later—by a man-eater, was a terrifying prospect.

There are events in one's life that, no matter how remote, never fade from memory; the climb up that hill in the dark was, for me, one of them. Alternately slipping on wet ground and stumbling over unseen rocks, we at last came to some stone steps. Climbing these steps we found a small courtyard, on the far side of which was a door. Kicking the door, I shouted to the inmates to open it. Receiving no answer I took out a box of matches and shaking it, said that if the door was not opened in a minute I would set the thatch alight. On this an agitated voice came from inside the house, begging me not to set the house on fire, and saying that the door was being opened. In two strides Ibbotson and I were in the house and, shutting the inner door, put our backs to it.

There were some twelve or fourteen men, women, and children of all ages in the room. When the men had regained their wits after our uncereceremonious entry, they begged us to forgive them for not having opened the door sooner, adding that they and their families had lived so long in terror of the man-eater that their courage had gone and, not knowing what form the man-eater might take, they suspected every sound they heard at night. In their fear they had our full sympathy, for from the time Ibbotson had slipped and broken the mantle, and a few minutes later had extinguished the lamp—which was red hot—to prevent its bursting, I had been convinced that one and possibly both of us would not live to reach the village.

My Night of Terror

I received a report that a cow had been killed seven miles up the pilgrim road. It was suspected that the cow had been killed by the man-eater.

I went down to the kill. The cow had been killed in a deep ravine a quarter of a mile from the road and a hundred yards from the river. On one side of the ravine there were big rocks with dense brushwood between, and on the other side a few small trees, none of which was big enough to sit in. Under the trees and about thirty yards from the kill there was a rock with a little hollow at the base of it. In this hollow I decided to sit.

With my back to the rock and a



small bush to conceal my legs I was confident the leopard would not see me and that I should be able to kill it before it was aware of my presence. I had provided myself with a flash-light and a knife, and with my good rifle across my knees I felt that in this secluded quiet spot my chances of killing the leopard were better than any I had yet had.

With my eyes on the rocks in front of me I sat through the evening, each second bringing the time nearer when the leopard would return to his kill.

In the deep ravine there was absolute silence. It was now dark and whereas previously I had depended on my eyes for protection, I now had to depend on my ears. With thumb on the button of the light and finger on trigger, I was prepared to shoot in any direction in which I heard the slightest sound.

The failure of the leopard to appear was beginning to cause me uneasiness. Was it possible that from some concealed place among the rocks he had been watching me all these hours, and was he now licking his lips in anticipation of burying his teeth in my throat? If I were to have the good fortune to leave the ravine on my feet, my ears would have to serve me now as they had never served me before.

For what seemed like hours I strained my ears, and then, noticing it was getting darker than it should have been, I looked up and saw that a heavy bank of clouds was drifting across the sky.

Shortly thereafter big drops of rain started to fall and, where there had been absolute and complete silence, there was now sound and movement all round. The opportunity the leopard had been waiting for had come. Hastily taking off my coat, I wound it round my neck, fastening it securely in place with the sleeves. The rifle was now useless but might help to cause a diversion; so transferring it to my left hand I unsheathed my knife and got a good grip on it with my right hand. The knife was what is called an Afridi stabbing knife, and I devoutly hoped it would serve me as well as it had served its late owner. When I bought it from the government store at Hangu on the Northwest Frontier, the Deputy Commissioner had drawn my attention to a label attached to it and to three notches on the handle, and said it had figured in three murders. Admittedly a gruesome relic, but I clutched it tight while the rain lashed down.

Should I go or should I remain? These were the questions that were exercising me, and the one was as unattractive as the other. If the leopard up to then had not seen me it would be foolish to give my position away and possibly fall across him on the difficult ground I would have to negotiate on my way up to the pilgrim road. On the other hand, to remain where I was for another six hours momentarily expecting to have to fight for my life with an unfamiliar weapon—would put a strain on my nerves that they were not capable of standing. Getting to my feet and shouldering the rifle, I set off.

I had not far to go, only about five hundred yards. When I eventually reached the road I sent a full-throated *coooo* into the night, and a moment later I saw a door in the village far up the hillside open.

I have been frightened times without number, but never have I been frightened as I was that night.

Leopard Fights Leopard

I received no news of the man-eater for two days. On the third morning, while I was having a late breakfast two men arrived and reported that a boy had been killed the previous evening at Bhainswara, a village eighteen miles southeast of Rudraprayag.

As I approached the village in company with the headman, I heard the wailing of a woman mourning her dead. It was the mother of the victim and she was the first to greet me when I arrived in the village.

I had a feeling that the leopard would return, and that when he failed to find his kill where he had left it he would come to the village to try and

secure another victim. I took up my position on a veranda and started my vigil with high hopes.

Heavy clouds had been gathering all evening, and at 8 p.m., when all the village sounds—except the wailing of the woman—were hushed, a flash of lightning followed by a distant roll of thunder heralded an approaching storm. For an hour the storm raged, the lightning being so continuous and brilliant that had a rat ventured into the courtyard I should have been able to shoot it. The rain eventually stopped, but the sky remained overcast, reducing visibility to a few inches. The time had now come for the leopard to start from wherever he had been sheltering from the storm.

In all the world there appeared to be no sound. This was as I had hoped it would be, for all I had to warn me of the leopard's arrival were my ears.

My ears, straining into the black darkness, first heard the sound when it was level with my feet—something was creeping—very stealthily creeping, over the straw on which I was lying. I was wearing shorts, which left my legs bare in the region of my knees. Presently, against this bare skin, I felt the hairy coat of an animal brushing—it could only be the man-eater, creeping up until he could lean over and get a grip on my throat. A little pressure now on my left shoulder—to get a foothold—and then, just as I was about to press the trigger of the rifle to cause a diversion, a small animal jumped down between my arms and my chest. It was a little kitten that had been caught out in the storm and, finding every door shut, had come to me for warmth and protection.

I was just beginning to recover from the fright when from beyond the terraced fields there was some low growling, which gradually grew louder. Then it merged into the most savage fight I have ever heard. Quite evidently the man-eater had returned to the spot where the previous night he had left his kill, and while he was searching for it, in not too good a temper, another male leopard, who looked upon this particular area as his hunting ground, had accidentally come across him and set on him.

The man-eater, though old, was a big and a very powerful male, and in the five hundred square miles he ranged over there was possibly no other male capable of disputing his rule. But here at Bhainswara he was a stranger and a trespasser and, to get out of the trouble he had brought on himself, he would have to fight for his life.

The first round, lasting about five minutes, was fought with unabating savagery, and was inconclusive, for at

the end of it I could still hear both animals. After an interval of ten or fifteen minutes, the fight was resumed, but at a distance of two to three hundred yards from where it had originally started. Quite evidently the local champion was getting the better of the fight and was gradually driving the intruder out of the ring. The third round was shorter than the two that had preceded it, but was no less savage, and when after another long period of silence the fight was again resumed, it had receded to the shoulder of the hill, where after a few minutes it died out of hearing.

I knew my mission to Bhainswara had failed, and my hope that the fight would be fought to a finish and would end in the death of the man-eater had been short-lived. The man-eater would sustain injuries, but they were not likely to reduce his craving for human flesh.

The eighteen miles had been long yesterday, but they were longer today, and the hills were steeper. In the villages the people were eagerly awaiting me, and though I only had bad news for them they did not show their disappointment. Their boundless faith in their philosophy—that no human beings and no animals can die before their appointed time—called for no explanation and admitted of no argument. The man-eater's time had not yet come.

As I swung down the last four miles to Rudraprayag I became aware that I was treading on the pug marks of the man-eater. Strange how one's mental condition can dull, or sharpen, one's powers of observation. The man-eater had quite possibly joined the track many miles farther back, and now, after my conversation with the simple village folk—and a drink of tea—I was seeing his pug marks for the first time that morning. The track reached the head of the ravine above Golabrai; down this ravine the leopard had gone.

A Shot in the Dark

After an hour's sleep and a bath, I set off for Golabrai to warn the Pundit who owned the pilgrim shelter there of the presence of the man-eater.

On arrival at Golabrai that evening I warned the Pundit to take extra precautions for his safety and for the safety of any pilgrims who might be staying in his shelter.

That night, and for the following three nights, I sat on a haystack, keeping a watch on the road. On the fourth day Ibbotson returned from Pauri.

I convinced Ibbotson that the only hope I now had of shooting the man-eater was by sitting over the road for ten nights; for as I pointed out to him,

the leopard would be almost certain to use the road at least once during that period.

That evening Ibbotson accompanied me to Golabrai and helped me to put up a *machan* in a mango tree, a hundred yards from the pilgrim shelter and fifty yards below the Pundit's house. Immediately below the tree, and in the middle of the road, we drove a stout wooden peg and to this peg we tethered a goat with a small bell round its neck. If the leopard came while it was dark, the goat would warn me of his approach.

When all our preparations had been made Ibbotson returned to the bungalow. Once during the night a *kakar* barked on the hill above me; thereafter the night was silent.

During the following nine days my program did not vary. During all those ten nights the barking of the *kakar* on the first night was all that I heard. That the man-eater was still in the vicinity, we had ample proof, for twice within those ten nights it had broken into houses and carried off on the first occasion a goat, and on the second a sheep.

After the tenth night in the mango tree, Ibbotson and I discussed our future plans. We finally agreed to decide on our line of action next morning. Having come to this decision I told Ibbotson I should spend my last night in Garhwal in the mango tree.

Ibbotson accompanied me on that eleventh, and last evening.

In a field adjoining the road and about a hundred yards from my tree, there was a thorn enclosure in which a packman earlier in the evening had penned his flock of goats and sheep. With the packman were two dogs.

The valley was in darkness, when a little after 9 p.m. I saw a man carrying

Crossword Puzzle Answer

T	F	O	L	A	S	W	E	S	T
F	F	U	B	E	N	I	E	R	N
A	M	E	D	I	A	K	S	P	E
L	B	T	U	B	A	P	A	L	P
A	E	C	A	R	S	O	A	R	G
S	E	S	E	S	E	S	E	N	D
I	W	O	S	W	L	E	R	A	V
R	E	T	U	T	A	L	T	I	T
E	T	E	B	U	T	O	T	P	I
S	E	O	R	S	A	R	S	T	A

You can turn this puzzle right side up if you want to. But why spoil your fun by peeking now? Puzzle is on inside back cover of this issue.

a lantern leave the pilgrim shelter and cross the road. A minute or two later, he recrossed the road and on gaining the shelter extinguished the lantern. At the same moment the packman's dogs started barking furiously. The dogs were unmistakably barking at a leopard, which had seen the man with the lantern and was now coming to the shelter.

The dogs at first barked in the direction of the road but after a little while they turned and barked in my direction. The leopard had now quite evidently caught sight of the sleeping goat, and had lain down out of sight of the dogs—which had stopped barking—to consider his next move.

Long minutes dragged by. My rifle, to which I had a small electric torch attached, was pointing in the direction of the goat, and I was just beginning to think that the leopard—assuming it was the man-eater—had reached the shelter and was selecting a human victim, when there was a rush from the foot of the tree and the goat's bell tinkled sharply. Pressing the button of the torch, I saw that the sights of the rifle were aligned on the shoulder of a leopard, and without having to move the rifle a fraction of an inch I pressed the trigger. As I did so, the torch went out. I was again in darkness without knowing what the result of my shot had been.

The leopard had been lying across the road with his head away from me when I fired, and I was vaguely aware of his having sprung over the goat and gone down the hillside. I thought I heard what may have been a gurgling sound, but of this I could not be sure. The goat appeared to be unhurt for, from the sound of his bell, I could tell that he was moving about.

I had fired my shot at 10 p.m. Hours later, when near-by objects became visible in the light of the day that was being born in the east, I descended from the tree and was greeted by a friendly bleat from the goat.

Beyond the goat, and at the very edge of the road, there was a long low rock, and on this rock there was an inch-wide streak of blood. The leopard from which that blood had come could only have lived a minute or two, so dispensing with the precautions usually taken when following up the blood trail of carnivora, I scrambled down off the road and, taking up the trail on the far side of the rock, followed it for fifty yards, to where the leopard was lying dead.

No marks by which I could identify the dead animal were visible. Even so, I never for one moment doubted that the leopard was the man-eater. But

here was no fiend, who, while watching me through the long night hours, had rocked and rolled with silent fiendish laughter at my vain attempts to outwit him, and had licked his lips in anticipation of the time when, finding me off my guard for one brief moment, he would get the opportunity he was waiting for of burying his teeth in my throat. Here was only an old leopard, who differed from others of his kind in that his muzzle was gray and his lips lacked whiskers; the best-hated and the most-feared animal in all India, whose only crime—not against the laws of nature, but against the laws of man—was that he had shed human blood, with no object of terrorizing man, but only in order that he might live.

Ibbotson was still asleep when I knocked on the glazed door, and the moment he caught sight of me he jumped out of bed and dashing to the door flung it open, embraced me, and next minute was dancing round the leopard, which the men had deposited on the veranda. Shouting for tea and a hot bath for me, he called for his stenographer and dictated telegrams to the Government, the press, and my sister, and a cable to Jean.

After Ibbotson and I had measured and examined the leopard, it was laid in the shade of a tree and throughout the day thousands of men, women, and children came to see it.

When the people of our hills visit an individual for any particular purpose, for instance, to show their gratitude or to express their thanks, it is customary for them not to go on this mission empty-handed—a rose, a marigold, or a few petals of either flower suffices, and the gift is proffered in hands cupped together. When the recipient has touched the gift with the tips of the fingers of his right hand, the person proffering the gift goes through the motion of pouring the gift onto the recipient's feet, in the same manner as he would have if his cupped hands had contained water.

I have, on occasions, witnessed gratitude, but never as I witnessed it that day at Rudraprayag, first at the inspection bungalow and later at a reception in the bazaar.

"He killed our only son, Sahib, and we being old our house is now desolate."

"He ate the mother of my five children—and the youngest but a few months old—and there is none in the home now to care for the children, or to cook the food."

"My son was taken ill at night and no one dared go to the hospital for medicine, and so he died."

Tragedy upon tragedy, and while I

listened the ground round my feet was strewn with flowers.

Epilogue

The events I have narrated took place in 1925-6. Sixteen years later, that is, in 1942, I was doing a war job in Meerut and my sister and I were invited one day to help entertain wounded men at a garden party. The men, some fifty or sixty in number, and from all parts of India, were sitting round a tennis court and were just finishing a sumptuous tea when we arrived. Taking opposite sides of the court, my sister and I started to go round the circle.

I had got about halfway round the circle when I came to a boy sitting in a low chair; he had been grievously wounded, and on the ground near his chair were two crutches. At my approach he very painfully slid off his chair and attempted to put his head on my feet. He was woefully light, for he had spent many months in the hospital, and when I had picked him up and made him comfortable in his chair, he said, "I have been talking with your lady sister, and when I told her I was a Garhwali, she told me who you were. I was a small boy when you shot the man-eater, and as our village is far from Rudraprayag I was not able to walk there, and my father not being strong was unable to carry me, so I had to stay at home. When my father returned he told me he had seen the man-eater, and that with his own eyes he had seen the Sahib who had shot it. He also told me of the sweets that had been distributed that day—his share of which he had brought back for me—and of the great crowds he had seen. And now, Sahib, I will go back to my home with great joy in my heart, for I shall be able to tell my father that with my own eyes I have seen you, and maybe, if I can get anyone to carry me to the *Mela* that is annually held at Rudraprayag to commemorate the death of the man-eater, I shall tell all the people I meet there that I have seen and had speech with you."

A typical son of Garhwal, of that simple and hardy hill folk, and of that greater India, whose sons only those few who live among them are privileged to know. It is these big-hearted sons of the soil, no matter what their caste or creed, who will one day weld the contending factions into a composite whole, and make of India a great nation.



What Do You Remember?

A Quiz Based on the Contents of This Issue

Bread and Games

In this story by John D. Weaver, Laird and Alvin represent two familiar types: The man who seems to get all the breaks from life without even trying, and the man who comes by his advantages the hard way. The riddle of why some people are born luckier than others will help you to sharpen your wits for the discussion periods ahead.

Is the pattern that these two brothers follow in later life laid out in childhood? Explain. Do you believe that some parents, in spite of their assertions to the contrary, favor certain children more than others? Give reasons for your answer. Discuss the point with reference to the mother of this story. Is the difference between Laird's lot in life and Alvin's simply a question of luck? Explain. Which person would you prefer as a companion—one who takes a dim view of life, or one who laughs and makes you laugh with him? Does your answer help to explain the difference between Laird's and Alvin's success with other people?

Command Decision

The following questions point up dramatic moments in the screen play. Fill the blanks with the missing word or words.

1. The action unfolds in 1943 at a U.S. Army Air Forces bomber base in _____.
2. For reasons of security, a plan to destroy three _____ factories in Germany is called Operation Stitch.
3. General _____ is a suave, man-of-the-world type, with traces of the strength which made him one of the heroes of early flying days.
4. He has just returned from selling the Combined Chiefs of Staff in Washington on the low cost of _____.
5. Brigadier General Garnet is touched by Captain Lee's confession that he's going back to the states to get _____.
6. Major Lansing's son is training to be an _____.
7. At the end of the play, _____ decides to complete Operation Stitch.

Eye-Stopppers

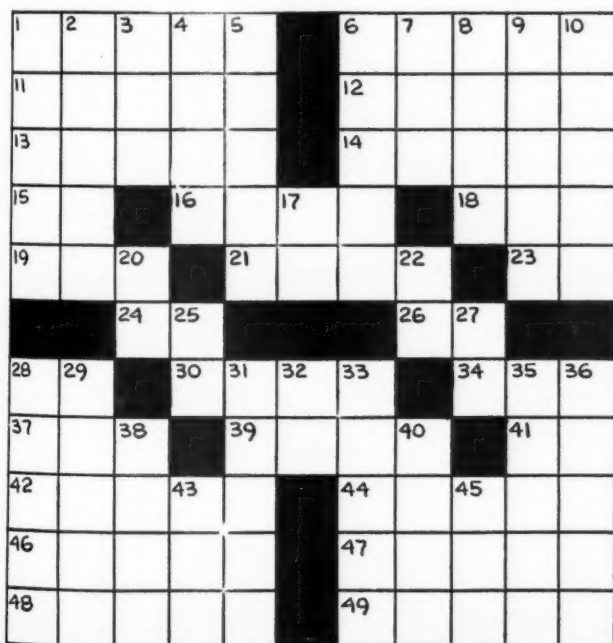
Here's a set of figurative phrases that should have given you pause and heightened your reading pleasure. In the parentheses before each quotation, write the title of the selection in which it appears.

1. () "Their wives see them, if at all, by television."
2. () "That sentimental snuffler."
3. () "Pale and melancholy as an unemployed clown."
4. () "Above them the stars were like a great scattering of salt crystals on a blue cloth."
5. () "Darkness had settled slowly over the hills which rimmed the town like the sides of a broken blue saucer, the creek marking the break."

Answers in Teacher Lesson Plan

This Puzzle Is the Tops!

• There are 52 words in this puzzle. The words starred with an asterisk (*) all relate to the same subject—words denoting height or altitude. See how many of these starred words you can get. Allow yourself five points for each starred word (there are 12) and one point for each of the others. If you get all the words, you'll have an even hundred. Answers are on page 31.



ACROSS

- * 1. Heavenly bodies.
- * 6. Ascended.
- * 11. He flies "into the wild blue yonder."
- * 12. Steep and isolated hill.
13. Member of the Axis in World War II.
14. Total; complete.
15. Chemical symbol for radium.
16. Hardwood shade trees.
18. Information agency during World War II (initials).
19. Conclusion.
21. "The _____ of Texas are upon you."
23. Southeast (abbrev.).
24. In Math, this is equal to 3.14.
26. "_____ say, can you see."
28. Abbrev. for Georgia.
- * 30. Fly high in the air.
34. Economic Cooperation Administration (initials).
- * 37. A lofty mountain.
39. To border
41. Pound (abbrev.).
- * 42. Sharp-pointed summits of mountains.
44. Plural of medium.
46. Beloved reporter, _____ Pyle.
- * 47. Cliff, with a bold, steep bank.
48. Parts of plants.
- * 49. On high; far above the earth.

DOWN

- * 1. Highest point; pinnacle.
- * 2. A famous giant of mythology.
3. Alabama (abbrev.).
4. Part in a play.
5. Manner of writing or speaking.
6. Use improperly.
7. Track worn by a wagon wheel.
8. Bismarck's first name.
9. Boils slowly.
10. Weird.
17. Belonging to me.
20. Abbrev. for Displaced Person.
22. Therefore.
25. *Here _____ Your War*, by 46 across.
27. "_____ is trampling out the vintage."
28. Stares with eyes wide and mouth open.
29. Ready; vigilant.
31. Flowering spots in the desert.
32. Bachelor of Arts (abbrev.).
33. Latin American dance rhythm.
- * 35. High steep rock; precipice.
36. Nautical term for "toward the aft or back part of the ship."
38. Sheet of glass.
40. William _____; Swiss hero.
43. Novel by Rudyard Kipling.
45. Duet in music.

Chucklebait



Probably few gifts are harder to cultivate than the ability to tell a humorous story well. It's never exactly right, never just the way you heard it first. The inflection may be off a shade, or two telling words in the punch line may be out of joint. It's like the story told about Mark Twain's swearing. To shame Mark into breaking the habit, his wife Livy once repeated a long string of "cuss" words exactly as her husband was in the habit of using them. Twain was in the next room. "All the words were in the right order," he called in cheerily, "but your inflection's all wrong."

Efficiency Plus . . .

Recently a Broadway playwright who had fathered a smash hit received a love note from the golden hills of Hollywood. On his first day in the movie capital, after a conference with the executive producer, he retreated to his assigned cubicle to chew a pencil. A friend dropped in before lunch. Together they sauntered to the studio commissary and sat down with a number of other writers concentrating on lunch.

When they began to eat, one of the writers looked at the ceiling and said, "Fourteen." The word produced a hurricane of laughter. A little later another writer said, "Twenty-nine." Again there was laughter. It was all very bewildering to the playwright, and the fact that this happened all through lunch didn't lessen his confusion.

On the way back from lunch the playwright asked his friend to let him in on the zany proceedings. The friend explained patiently that in Hollywood everything is streamlined efficiency. Even the jokes are numbered and everybody tells them by number. He lent the playwright a tattered copy of a pamphlet with the numbered jokes



The playwright sat up late that night cramming this priceless literature. At lunch the next day he waited for his opportunity, then pounced. "Twenty-three," he said. Nobody even smiled. A little later one of the other writers said "Twelve." The table howled. The poor playwright was even more confused than he had been the day before.

Again the playwright cornered his friend. "What," he inquired, "was wrong with that joke I cracked?"

"Nothing wrong with the joke," the playwright was told. "They just didn't like the way you told it."

Speaking of Hollywood, there is an old legend that a producer is supposed to have demanded that the author of *David Copperfield* appear at the head office to attend a story conference. Let's be generous and say the story isn't true. But a few weeks ago an elderly lady visited the editorial floor receptionist at the New York *World-Telegram*, which had been running a Dickens Christmas story. She requested the home address and phone number of the staff writer "who is writing that wonderful Christmas story in your paper." She wished to express her appreciation to Mr. Dickens personally.

They Stole Our Act

In the same vein is the story of which we were reminded by the Mardi Gras feature in this issue. For many years, the triumphal Grand March from Verdi's opera *Aida* has been part of the musical background of the carnival season in New Orleans. At a sidewalk cafe in Paris, these stirring strains reached the ears of two homesick soldiers from New Orleans. They listened quietly and reverently, their eyes misted over, their thoughts far away with the floats and the marchers and the crowds and the confetti. When the music was over, one turned to the other and said in amazement, "But how in the world do you suppose they know about the *Mardi Gras March*—way over here?"

At this point we are in the position of the preacher who read a carefully written sermon under the shrewd eye of a small boy who sat in the gallery watching him intently. One page after another was read and laid aside until 30 or 40 of them had been piled up to the left while the pile to the right kept diminishing. When the last leaf had joined its fellows on the left, the minister lifted his face and said, "And so brethren, on this wonderful theme I could go on and on and on."

This was too much for the boy in the gallery. "No you couldn't," he whispered down. "You've run out of stuff and you know it!"

• This is your last chance to order *Literary Cavalcade* for the new semester and still be sure to receive all the issues. Ask your teacher to list your name on the *Literary Cavalcade* order.